



**The month of December  
is dedicated to the  
Immaculate Conception**

## **December 2024 – Overview for the Month**

### **DESCRIPTION**



The month of December is dedicated to the Immaculate Conception.

### **Highlights**

#### **December 12**

#### **Our Lady of Guadalupe**

Mary, who was "intimately united with the birth of the Church in America, became the radiant Star illuminating the proclamation of Christ the Saviour to the sons of these nations." —John Paul II



#### **Recipe of the Month**

#### ***Speculaus***

This hard spice cookie is made for the feast of St. Nicholas in Holland. It is a delicious cookie and appropriate for Christmas as well.



## Activity of the Month

### Jesse Tree

The Tree of Jesse, with its symbols representing Old Testament stories and events leading up to the birth of Christ, is another approach to the meaning of Christmas.



## Symbols

### Immaculate Conception

Based on dogma, the singular grace of Our Lady is celebrated on December 8th.



### St. John

This emblem of St. John, the "Beloved Apostle," refers to the legend of a poisoned chalice being offered to him in an attempt made on his life.



### St. Stephen

These arms, evidently of French origin, are displayed at Dijon. The stones refer to the manner of his death and the palm to his spiritual victory.



### St. Lucy

This wealthy Sicilian maiden was, after torture, killed by a sword thrust through her throat. The emblem refers to her continuing devotion to Christ—an early symbol of martyrdom, deriving possibly from the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins.



*O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee.*

## PUBLISHER & DATE

Catholic Culture, July 2, 2021

The first 24 days of December fall during the liturgical season known as of **Advent** and are represented by the liturgical color purple—a symbol of penance, mortification and the sorrow of a contrite heart. The remaining days of December mark the beginning of the **Christmas** season. The liturgical color changes to white or gold — a symbol of joy, purity and innocence.

---

## The Holy Father's Intentions for the Month of December 2024

**For Pilgrims of Hope** We pray that this Jubilee Year strengthens our faith, helping us to recognize the Risen Christ in our daily lives and that it may transform us into pilgrims of Christian hope. (See also <http://www.popesprayerusa.net/>)

---

## Feasts for December 2024

1. **FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT**, *Sunday*
3. **Francis Xavier**, *Memorial*
6. **Nicholas**, *Opt. Mem.*
7. **Ambrose**, *Memorial*
8. **SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT**, *Sunday*
9. **IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF MARY**, *Solemnity*
11. **Damasus I**, *Opt. Mem.*
12. **Our Lady of Guadalupe (USA)**, *Feast*
13. **Lucy**, *Memorial*
14. **John of the Cross**, *Memorial*
15. **THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT, GAUDETE SUNDAY**, *Sunday*
21. **Peter Canisius**; **O Dayspring**; **Ember Saturday**, *Opt. Mem.*
22. **FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**, *Sunday*
23. **John of Kanty**; **O Emmanuel**, *Opt. Mem.*
25. **NATIVITY OF THE LORD (Christmas)**, *Solemnity*
26. **Stephen**, *Feast*
27. **John, Apostle**, *Feast*
28. **Holy Innocents**, *Feast*
29. **Feast of the Holy Family**, *Feast*
31. **Seventh Day in the Octave of Christmas**; **Sylvester I**, *Opt. Mem.*

## Focus of the Liturgy

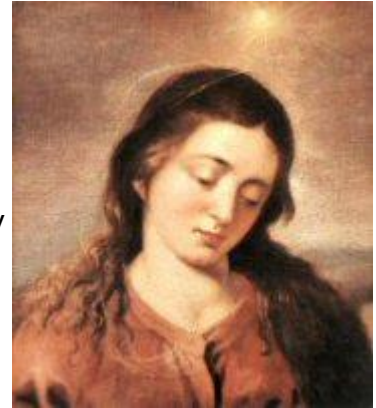
The Gospels for the four Sundays in December 2024 are taken from St. Luke, Year C in the Lectionary Cycle. The Weekday readings are from Year I.

<b>December 1st</b> First Sunday of Advent	<b>Luke 21:25-28, 34-36:</b> Jesus warns that your redemption is at hand.
<b>December 8th</b> Second Sunday of Advent	<b>Luke 3:1-6:</b> All flesh shall see the salvation of God.
<b>December 15th</b> Third Sunday of Advent	<b>Luke 3:10-18:</b> What should we do?
<b>December 22nd</b> Fourth Sunday of Advent	<b>Luke 1:39-45,</b> And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?
<b>December 25th</b> Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord [Christmas]	<b>Vigil: Matthew 1:1-25:</b> The genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David <b>Mass During the Night: Luke 2:1-14:</b> Today a Savior has been born for you. <b>Mass at Dawn: Luke 2:15-20:</b> The shepherds found Mary and Joseph and the infant. <b>Mass During the Day: John 1:1-18:</b> The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.
<b>December 29th</b> Feast of the Holy Family	<b>Luke 2:41-52:</b> His parents found Jesus sitting in the midst of the teachers.

---

## Highlights of the Month

The liturgy of Advent focuses on remembering Christ's first coming at Bethlehem which then directs our mind to Christ's Second Coming at the end of time. The readings focus on the people of the Old Testament awaiting the Messiah, John the Baptist, heralding the way for Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary and her maternal preparations.



The liturgy of Advent focuses on remembering Christ's first coming at Bethlehem which then directs our mind to Christ's Second Coming at the end of time. The readings focus on the people of the Old Testament awaiting the Messiah, John the Baptist, heralding the way for Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary and her maternal preparations.

The main feasts of Advent are:

**St. Francis Xavier** (December 3),  
**St. John Damascene** (December 4),  
**St. Nicholas** (December 6),  
**St. Ambrose** (December 7),  
**Immaculate Conception** (moved to December 9),  
**Our Lady of Loreto** (December 10),  
**St. Damasus I** (December 11),  
**Our Lady of Guadalupe** (December 12),  
**St. Lucy** (December 13),  
**St. John of the Cross** (December 14),  
**St. Peter Canisius** (December 21)  
and **St. John of Kanty** (December 23).

Christmastide begins with the First Vespers (Evening Prayer) of Christmas on December 24th and ends on the Sunday after Epiphany. The Solemnity of Epiphany is transferred to January 5 in the United States in 2025. Christmas and Easter are the only solemnities with octaves attached in the current calendar. The Christmas Octave differs from Easter in that it includes some major and minor feasts: **St. Stephen, Protomartyr** (December 26), **St. John the Evangelist** (December 27), the **Holy Innocents** (December 28), **St. Thomas Becket** (December 29) and **St. Sylvester I** (December 31). The octave day is on January 1, **the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God**.

The optional memorial of **St. Juan Diego** (December 9) is superseded by the Sunday liturgy. The feast of the **Immaculate Conception** (December 8) has been transferred to December 9 because of the Sunday Liturgy.

### **The Reason for the Season**

The month of December is filled with expectation and celebration. Preparation is the key word for the first 24 days of December. Everyone is getting ready for Christmas — shopping and decorating, baking and cleaning. Too often, however, we are so busy with the material preparations that we lose sight of the real reason for our activity.

Christmas is a Christian feast — and we must reclaim it as such! In the same way that a family eagerly prepares for a baby, so in Advent should we prepare for the coming of the Christ Child. We should keep Advent as a season of waiting and longing, of conversion and of hope and keep our thoughts on the incredible love and humility of our God in taking on the flesh of the Virgin Mary. Let us not forget to prepare a peaceful place in our hearts wherein our Savior may come to dwell.

The best person we can turn to for help during Advent is Mary, Christ's and our Mother. She awaited the day of His birth with more eagerness than any other human being. Her preparation was complete in every respect. Let's crown our preparation and borrow something of Mary's prayerfulness, her purity and whole-hearted submission to God's will.



This item 12537 digitally provided courtesy of [CatholicCulture.org](http://CatholicCulture.org)