

**OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE CHAPEL**  
**SAINT VINCENT HOSPITAL**  
**WORCESTER MEDICAL CENTER**  
**Fourth Sunday of Advent**  
**December 18, 2022**



The dream of Joseph symbolizes the spiritual life within him. The inner space where God manifests Himself and, through His messengers and amid situations that are not understandable, God offers a solution.

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**CHAPEL SCHEDULE**

*Weekday Mass:* (Monday-Friday at 12 noon)

*Weekend Masses:* Saturday: 4:00pm - Sunday: 7:30am & 4:00pm

*Holyday Mass Schedule:* afternoon prior at 4:00pm

Holyday proper at 12 noon and 4:00pm

*Confessions:* First Saturday of every month at 3:30pm

*Department Telephone:* 508.363.6246

*Chapel Website:* [www.ourladyofprovidence.net](http://www.ourladyofprovidence.net)

## **MASS INTENTIONS — LITURGICAL SCHEDULE**

Saturday, December 17 *Vigil of the 4th Sunday of Advent — Late Advent Begins*

4:00pm +Judith Foley by the former SVH School of Nursing alumnae

Sunday, December 18 *Fourth (or Last) Sunday of Advent*

7:30am +Beverly Adua — 5th anniversary

4:00pm +Deceased members of the Sheeran, White, and Foley families

Monday, December 19

12:00nn +Maureen Murphy

Tuesday, December 20

12:00nn +Rita Sullivan

Wednesday, December 21 *St. Peter Canisius, priest & doctor*<sup>2</sup>

12:00nn +James Woodruff

Thursday, December 22

12:00nn +Mary Gray by her daughter

Friday, December 23

12:00nn +Carol Gray by his daughter

Saturday, December 24 *Christmas Eve: Vigil of the Nativity of the Lord*

4:00pm +Edward Manahan — 13th anniversary by his wife

Sunday, December 25 *Christmas Day—Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord*

7:30am +John and Mary Murray by their family

4:00pm +Stephen L'Esperance

The Key to Understanding the Day's Liturgical Significance: *Sunday is the day that the Church celebrates the Paschal mystery—the Lord's Day—which, according to apostolic tradition, is the day of Christ's Resurrection. The Sundays of Advent, Lent, and during the Easter Season take precedence over other celebrations. Solemnities honor significant religious events, beliefs or saints of the greatest importance and universal in their observance that begin at Vespers (or Evening Prayer) the day before. Feasts must be observed, though, less important than solemnities, hence, feasts are only observed on the natural day. Memorials are of two types: Either the observance is an obligatory memorial<sup>1</sup> or an optional memorial<sup>2</sup>.*

### **Toward a Better Understanding of the Gospels of Advent**

Scriptural testimony affirms that Jesus is the son of David whether in the Gospel of Matthew or Saint Paul's Letter to the Romans. Just prior to this week's Gospel passage, Saint Matthew begins that pericope with this introductory verse to the Lord's genealogy which, then, follows, "The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham" (Mt 1:1). Afterwards, the evangelist begins the announcement of how the birth of Jesus came about and how the Messiah's Davidic sonship arose through Joseph. Yet, because of Mary's virginal conception "before they lived together," Joseph had "decided to divorce her quietly." Described as "a righteous man" and faced with a situation he could not humanly understand, the only legitimate course that appeared open to Joseph was to abrogate the rights that betrothal gave him and to leave Mary and her Child in the hands of God whose plan this miraculous conception seemed to have been. Reaching such a conclusion, forsaking any claim he had on his betrothed, Joseph was ignorant of his part in the mystery of the Savior's birth until God chose to reveal to him what his role was going to be. The revelation took place in a dream or vision. An angel appears to him and says, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She is to bear a son and you are to name him Jesus..." This announcement and the angelic declaration was meant to reveal to Joseph the role he would have in the unfolding mystery of salvation and not as an explanation of Mary's virginal conception. Confronted by the mystery, Joseph realized that withdrawing in humility before what his eyes could only humanly perceive was not what God wanted to happen. He then knew that he had to take Mary as "his wife into his home." As Mary had done when Gabriel told her that she was going to be the virgin Mother of the Savior, Joseph agrees to what God had asked of him because, as a righteous man, that was what God had commanded him to do through His divine messenger (Gk. ἄγγελος). Living in the intermediate time between the Lord's Ascension when He returned to the right hand of the Father and the unknown Omega point when Christ will come again, now is the time in which salvation remains available. Such a divine offer is subject to our acceptance or refusal. Yes, the Kingdom of God has already begun, but God's reign will only be fully realized when Christ returns in glory. The Father's plan for the world's salvation began with the promise He made to

## Saint Leo the Great — Sermon 28 on the Nativity

The majesty of the Son of God, Who is equal to the Father, when clothing itself with the lowliness of a servant, neither feared diminution nor needed increase, and by the sole power of Godhead could effect that operation of its own mercy, which it was bestowing on the restoration of a man, so as to rescue from the yoke of a dreadful tyrant the creature formed after God's image. But since the devil had not so proceeded by sheer force against the first man, as to draw him over to his own side without consent of his free-will, therefore in such sort were that voluntary sin and that hostile design to be destroyed, as that the gift of grace should not clash with the rule of justice. Accordingly, amid the universal ruin of the whole human race, there was but one remedy which, under the mysterious law of the Divine procedure, could come to the aid of the prostrated; and that was, if some son of Adam could be born, unconnected with original transgression, and innocent, who could benefit the rest both by his example and his merit.

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Adam and Eve which was initially fulfilled in sending His only-begotten Son to be born of the Virgin Mary. Jesus of Nazareth confronted the supreme test of the Cross and willingly died on Calvary so that the human nature, which the eternal Word took from Mary His Mother would be restored. Raised from the dead and before returning to heaven, the Risen Christ promised to send another Paraclete or the Holy Spirit so that the redemptive work that Christ began would continue. Saint Matthew quotes the prophecy of Isaiah, "...the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means 'God is with us.'" The prophetic citation (Is 7:14) notes that God will give this sign – a young woman, pregnant and about to bear a son is the sign promised. The sacred name Emmanuel (or God-with-us) is not meant to indicate we have power over God; no, by choosing Mary who was and remained a virgin, God made the birth of the Child Jesus the ultimate sign of the world's salvation. The blameless Joseph is the epitome of righteousness because, once the role he had in the life of Jesus and Mary was revealed to him, he agreed to the angel's command without hesitation. Though he initially decided to discreetly withdraw from the unforeseen development because his espoused was already with Child, when he realized God had a mission for him to undertake, Joseph demurred to the Almighty. The revelation also required Joseph to name the Child as Jesus and that sacred name's meaning was given, too, "you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." Thus, the Child to be born will bear two designations – In English the name Jesus comes from the Latin form of the Greek name Ἰησοῦς (Iēsous), which, in turn, is a rendition of the Hebrew Yeshua related to the name Joshua. To name the Child Emmanuel or God-with-us is not an actual naming in the strict sense as it is to call the Child Emmanuel; thus, the expected Messiah would be God-with-us.

**Eucharistic Revival: 19 June 2022 to 17-21 July 2024 (National Eucharistic Congress, Indianapolis Indiana)**

Visit the Eucharist in the Tabernacle: ABCs: Adore Him with simple words as to why you believe in the Real Presence; recall the Blessings you received; express Contrition and offer Supplication to supply the needy.

### **THE HOLY SEASON OF ADVENT—WEEK FOUR**

On the Fourth Sunday of Advent, the head of the last week of preparing for Christ's birth, the fourth candle symbolizes love and, so, it serves as a beacon to experience the love of Christ, as well share that gift with others. Advent has prepared us for the coming of Christ, and this last week brings it all together. "God so loved the world that he sent his only Son" (John 3:16). It is also called the angels' candle. The night that Jesus was born, angels appeared to shepherds outside Bethlehem, announcing the Messiah's birth and telling them where to find him (Luke 2:8-20). Later on, after the Wise Men had visited Mary and Joseph with gifts for Jesus, an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream. This time, as a warning that Herod's soldiers were coming to slaughter the male infants of Bethlehem and the Holy Family fled to Egypt and did not return until another angel appeared and told Joseph that Herod had died and that while it was safe to return, they eventually settled in Nazareth.

### **Prayer for Advent Love**

You are King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Messiah, and Ruler of All, yet you came not as a lion but as a lamb. You came as an innocent Child whose purpose was to walk this earth in complete love and then to sacrificially give your life as an atonement for the sins of your children. Emmanuel. God with us. Love in the form of an infant. There is no greater gift than this, that a man should lay down his life for his friends.

### **Holiday of Obligation - Christmas & New Year's Mass Schedule**

Christmas Mass Schedule	New Year's Mass Schedule
<i>Saturday, December 24</i> 4:00pm: Vigil Mass of Christmas	<i>Saturday, December 31</i> 4:00pm Vigil Mass
<i>Sunday, December 25</i> 7:30 - 12nn - 4:00pm	<i>Sunday, January 1, 2023</i> 12nn and 4pm

# Late Advent: The First & Last of the O Antiphons

## Introduction

December 17 marks the beginning of the "O" Antiphons an ancient part of our liturgy, dating back to the fourth century, one for each day until Christmas Eve. These antiphons address Christ with seven magnificent Messianic titles, based on the Old Testament prophecies and types of Christ. The Church recalls the variety of the ills of man before the coming of the Redeemer. In the medieval work known as the Golden Legend (Lat. *Legenda aurea* or *Legenda sanctorum*) by Jacobus de Voragine, in the chapter entitled "The Spiritual Advent and the Return of the Lord," you would find this, "With regard to the advent in the flesh, three things should be considered: its timeliness, its necessity, and its usefulness. Its timeliness is due first to the fact that man, condemned by his nature to an imperfect knowledge of God, had fallen into the worst errors of idolatry, and was forced to cry out, 'Enlighten my eyes.' Secondly, the Lord came in the 'fullness of time,' as Saint Paul says in the Epistle to the Galatians. Thirdly, He came at a time when the whole world was ailing, as Saint Augustine says: 'The great physician came at a moment when the entire world lay like a great invalid.' That is why the Church, in the seven antiphons that are sung before the Feast of the Nativity, recalls the variety of our ills and the timeliness and the divine remedy. Before the coming of God in the flesh, we were ignorant, subject to eternal punishment, slaves of the devil, shackled with sinful habits, lost in darkness, exiled from our true country. Hence the ancient antiphons announce Jesus in turn as our Teacher, our Redeemer, our Liberator, our Guide, our Enlightener, and our Savior."

## December 17

*O Wisdom (Sirach 24:3), You came forth from the mouth of the Most High (Sirach 24:30), and reaching from beginning to end You ordered all things mightily and sweetly (Wisdom 8:1). Come, and teach us the way of prudence (Isaiah 40:14).* The cry of the ages was for a Redeemer to come and save us. The book of Sirach (Sir 24: 3-12) contains a passage labeled as the Praise of Wisdom. With Wisdom speaking, she says, "From the mouth of the Most High I came forth, and covered the earth like a mist. In the heights of heaven I dwelt, and my throne was in a pillar of cloud. The vault of heaven I compassed alone, and walked through the deep abyss. Over waves of the sea, over all the land, over every people and nation I held sway. Among all these I sought a resting place. In whose inheritance should I abide? Then the Creator of all gave me his command, and my Creator chose the spot for my tent. He said, 'In Jacob make your dwelling, in Israel your inheritance.' Before all ages, from the beginning, he created me, and through all ages I shall not cease to be. In the holy tent (Gk. σκηνή) I ministered before him, and so I was established in Zion. In the city he loves as he loves me, he gave me rest; in Jerusalem, my domain. I struck root among the glorious people, in the portion of the Lord, his heritage." The antiphons take on Old Testament words and images, which are then ascribed to the Messiah. This citation from the Wisdom literature incorporates the creation account in Genesis and what would eventually be elements of the Prologue to the Gospel of Saint John. The Greek word for tent or *skene* can mean

tent, booth, or tabernacle. Where it is written, "In Jacob make your dwelling" the Greek word used for *make your dwelling* is κατασκηνώσων, which can also be rendered as to take up quarters or to encamp. This is a simile of the word that is used in the Prologue of Saint John's Gospel to refer to the Incarnation: "and the word was made flesh and dwelt (literally: pitched His tent) among us." This phraseology reoccurs in the Book of Revelation: "Behold the tabernacle (σκηνή/skēnē) of God is with men, He will dwell (literally: pitch his tent, σκηνώσει skēnōsei) with them and they shall be His people and He will be their God" (Rev 21:3). And so the cry of the ages for the Wisdom of God to come is answered in time in the Incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ. He took a body, assuming human nature, as a dwelling place with us. He reveals God in His divine nature, in the three divine Persons, that we might know the Father. He dwelt with us in time that we might dwell with God forever. The Wisdom literature in the Old Testament presents Wisdom as existing before time began and abiding with God (Prov 8:22-36). Sapientia or Wisdom is incorporated into God's love. With universal concern, Wisdom descends from her royal throne and comes down to Israel in order to save the nation and its people as had been true during the Exodus (Wis 18:15). To the Israelites, wisdom displays a mother's love or presents herself as a spiritual spouse. Resplendent in eternal light, wisdom is the perfect mirror, reflecting divine activity. Coming out of the mouth of the Most High, wisdom seeks to satisfy the hunger and thirst for those who seek her, who is the true tree of Knowledge (Sir 24; Prov 9:1-6).

## December 23

*O Emmanuel (Isaiah 7:14; 8:8; Luke 1:31-33), our King and Lawgiver (Genesis 49:10; cf. Ezekiel 21:32), the Expected of the nations and their Savior (Isa 33:22): Come, and save us, O Lord our God.*

God is not only the Most High, everywhere present, Creator, and Savior but the antiphons reach the ultimate Messianic title of Emmanuel or God-with-us. A prophetic name used by Isaiah foreshadowing the coming of Jesus (Isaiah 7:14) and the belief that the child to be born in Bethlehem would be "the one who is to rule over Israel" and is advanced by another prophet, Micah (Micah 5:2). But if the Christmas message that Jesus is Emmanuel constitutes a stunning statement about the presence of the divine, it also clarifies the various kinds of actions that ought to punctuate His followers' lives. "In Jesus, God himself became Emmanuel, God-with-us, the God who walks alongside us, who gets involved in our lives, in our homes, in the midst of our 'pots and pans', as Saint Teresa of Jesus liked to say (Pope Francis. Homily September 25, 2015 Madison Square Garden). Maranatha - Come Lord Lord! According to the New American Bible, when maranatha is understood as "O Lord, come!", it is a prayer for the early return of Christ. If those two Aramaic words are divided differently as Maran atha, then it means that "Our Lord has come". As such, it becomes a creedal declaration. The former interpretation is supported by what appears to be a Greek equivalent of this acclamation in the Book of Revelation: "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev 22:20).