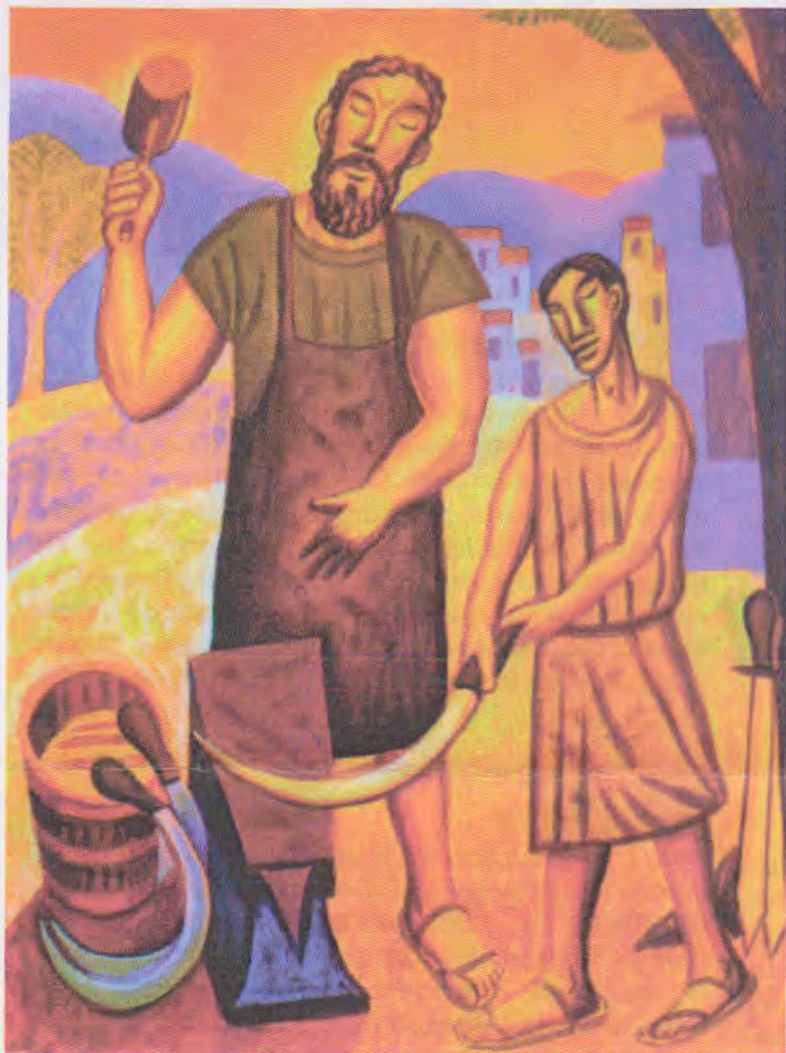


# FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT



## Christ our Peace

Father, we stream toward your  
mountain  
where you teach us the ways of peace  
and invite us to share in your salvation.  
Awaken us from our sleep  
so that through your grace  
the humble poor will be blessed!  
May your Word refashion our hearts  
and hands  
to pound our weapons into tools  
of service  
and banish all fear and distrust.  
As we come to the setting of the sun,  
may we walk in the light of your glory,  
and be ready to meet you  
at an hour we do not expect.  
We ask this through our light and  
everlasting peace,  
our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the  
unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God for ever and ever. Amen.

**Sunday, December 1, 2013**

**Walk in the Light of the Lord's Peace!**

Today's Readings: Isaiah 2:1–5; Romans 13:11–14; Psalm 122:1–2, 3–4, 4–5, 6–7, 8–9; Matthew 24:37–44. Today's First Reading invites us to climb the mountain of the Lord, to be instructed in the ways of our God, and walk on the path of justice and peace. God is gathering us to himself, and through the revelation of the Word, God is creating a new and universal community built upon harmony and lasting peace. Yet we live in times of conflict and war; we must lay down our weapons (physical weapons and violent attitudes) and take up the light of Christ's peace.

As we enter into this period of joyful expectation again, we adopt a hope-filled attitude and open ourselves to the kindness and salvation of our God. Through the Savior, God

again extends his infinite and redeeming love. Unlike the people Matthew speaks of, who, in the time of Noah, were unconcerned about the Lord's will for us, we try to prepare for his coming by staying awake and being attentive to the needs of the world. What needs? As in Isaiah's time, the world needs peace! Advent is the time to practice peace, to focus on reasons to rejoice in the Lord. In the domestic church of your home, explore ways that peace can take root—discussing conflicts instead of letting them build or explode, learning to find resolutions between different points of view. O Lord, give us peace in this holy season and help us to change our lives and live according to the Gospel.



## THIS WEEK AT HOME

### Monday, December 2

#### Invite the Lord under Your Roof

The centurion's words in today's Gospel, "Lord I am not worthy to have you come under my roof," are like the words we now say at Mass before receiving the Body and Blood of the Lord. During this holy season, gathered at the family dining table around the Advent wreath, invite the Lord under your roof. Share the light of Christ as you pray for the peace of God, whose face shines on us all. How do you proclaim peace in today's world? Today's Readings: Isaiah 4:2-6; Psalm 122: 1-2, 3-4b, 4cd-5, 6-7, 8-9; Matthew 8:5-11.

### Tuesday, December 3

#### St. Francis Xavier

The Holy Spirit is always at work in the Church. In today's Gospel, Jesus rejoices in the Spirit and reveals the truth to the child-like. The Spirit leads missionaries, like St. Francis Xavier, whose memorial we celebrate today, to share the love of Christ in places where he is not known. If you have children in your household, find places this Jesuit priest visited in the sixteenth century on a map of India and Japan, talk about respecting people of different cultures, and pray for missionaries. Today's Readings: Isaiah 11:1-10; Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17; Luke 10:21-24.

### Wednesday, December 4

#### St. John Damascene

John Damascene, the eighth-century saint whose memorial may be celebrated today, defended the Church's veneration of sacred images. Looking upon images of the Lord, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the saints is like looking through a window that leads us to the face of God. In today's Gospel, Jesus feeds the multitudes. What could you do in Advent to feed the poor? Bring one or two cans of food to your church or local St. Vincent DePaul Society to be shared with households in need. Today's Readings: Isaiah 25:6-10a; Psalm 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6; Matthew 15:29-37.

### Thursday, December 5

#### The Rock of Salvation

Isaiah tells us today that God is our solid rock upon which we build a life of spiritual practices. Try the ancient practice of *lectio divina* (pronounced LEK-tsee-oh dih-vee-nuh), or sacred reading of Scripture. Choose a Scripture passage and read it slowly (*lectio*), meditating on a word or phrase from the passage (*meditatio*), allowing a prayer to flow from the text (*oratio*), and resting in God's divine being (*contemplatio*). The *lectio* and *meditatio* steps are repeated two or three times before moving to *oratio* and *contemplatio*. Today's Readings: Isaiah 26:1-6; Psalm 118:1 and 8-9, 19-21, 25-27a; Matthew 7:21, 24-27.

### Friday, December 6

#### St. Nicholas

Many legends surround this fourth-century bishop who lived in what is now Turkey and whose memorial may be celebrated today. He is best known for his concern for the poor. Begin collecting coins today, and on January 22nd (the day of prayer for the legal protection of unborn children, established by the U.S. bishops) share what you collect with a local organization that advocates for unborn children. Day to day, pray about how to uphold the dignity of each human person. Today's Readings: Isaiah 29:17-24; Psalm 27:1, 4, 13-14; Matthew 9:27-31.

### Saturday, December 7

#### St. Ambrose

This fourth-century bishop, whose memorial we celebrate today, was a great teacher, and he also composed many hymn texts during his life. His words for the Advent carol "Savior of the Nations, Come" are found in most hymnals, or find the hymn at <http://www.cyberhymnal.org/html/s/a/saviorof.htm>, where you can hear the melody through Midi. Consider praying these words or even learning the song as this first week of Advent closes. Today's Readings: Isaiah 30:19-21, 23-26; Psalm 147:1-2, 3-4, 5-6; Matthew 9:35-10:1, 5a, 6-8.



© Liturgy Training Publications. 1-800-933-1800. Written by Michael R. Prendergast. Illustrated by James B. Janknegt. Scripture quotations are from the *New Revised Standard Version of the Bible: Catholic edition*, copyright © 1993, 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. Used by Permission. All rights reserved. Permission to publish granted by the Archdiocese of Chicago, on March 25, 2013.

Keeping the Seasons

Reproducibles for Advent-Christmas 2013-2014