



## Remembering Vocations in Your 2024 Advent Devotions. . .

Advent is the season of preparation for our celebration of the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Advent is also the season to pray for the faithful to be called to follow in the life of Christ as shepherds of his flock just as He was born to lead us to salvation.

As you sacrifice and prepare for Christmas, ask the Holy Spirit to apply your devotions to the birth of new vocations to the religious life.

“At this point in time, then, our common journey is bringing us to the Jubilee Year of 2025. Let us travel as pilgrims of hope towards the Holy Year, for by discovering our own vocation and its place amid the different gifts bestowed by the Spirit, we can become for our world messengers and witnesses of Jesus’ dream of a single human family, united in God’s love and in the bond of charity, cooperation and fraternity.” *Francis I*<sup>1</sup>

### The Advent Wreath

The advent wreath is a circle representing the promise of eternal life to those who follow Jesus. It is made of evergreens to symbolize that God always loves us. There are four candles—one for each week of advent; they symbolize Christ, the “Light of the World.” The first, second and fourth Sundays’ candles are purple to signify penance. The candle for the third Sunday is rose colored, a reminder that the joy of Christmas is almost at hand.

The following devotions for each week of advent focus on the need for vocations to be “born” into the Church so that Christ’s light can continue to be brought to the world.

**December 1, First Sunday of Advent** [*One purple candle*]

**December 3, Feast of St. Francis Xavier**

**December 6, Feast of St. Nicholas, Bishop, Patron of Children**



### Prayer

Lord, our God, we praise You for Your Son, Jesus Christ, for He is Emmanuel, the Hope of all people. He is the Wisdom that teaches and guides us. He is the Savior of us all.

O Lord, let your blessing come upon us as we light the first candle of this wreath. May the wreath and its light be a sign of Christ’s promise of salvation. May He come quickly and not delay. We ask this in His holy name. Amen.

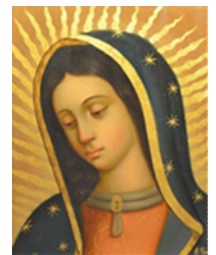
### Meditation

“Let Jesus draw you to himself; bring him your important questions by reading the Gospels; let him challenge you by his presence, which always provokes in us a healthy crisis.” *Francis I*<sup>1</sup>

**December 8, Second Sunday in Advent** [*Two purple Candles*]

**December 9, Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

**December 12, Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe**



### Prayer

Lord, our God, we praise You for Your Son, Jesus Christ, for He is Emmanuel, the Hope of all people. He is the Wisdom that teaches and guides us. He is the Savior of us all. O Lord, let

<sup>1</sup> Message for 61<sup>st</sup> World Day of Prayer for Vocations, Pope Francis I, April 21, 2024

your blessing come upon us as we light the first and second candles of this wreath. May the wreath and its light be a sign of Christ's promise of salvation. May He come quickly and not delay. We ask this in His holy name. Amen.

### **Meditation**

“More than anyone else, Jesus respects our freedom. He does not impose, but proposes. Make room for him and you will find the way to happiness by following him. And, should he ask it of you, by giving yourself completely to him.” *Francis I*<sup>1</sup>

**December 15, Third Sunday of Advent** [*Two purple candles and the rose candle*]

### **Prayer**

Lord, our God, we praise You for Your Son, Jesus Christ, for He is Emmanuel, the Hope of all people. He is the Wisdom that teaches and guides us. He is the Savior of us all. O Lord, let your blessing come upon us as we light three candles of this wreath. May the wreath and its light be a sign of Christ's promise of salvation. May He come quickly and not delay. We ask this in His holy name. Amen.

### **Meditation**

“In the pilgrimage of life, there will inevitably be challenges to face. In earlier times, long pilgrimages involved coping with changing seasons and climates, crossing pleasant meadows and cool forests, but also snow-capped mountains and parched deserts. Even for those who are believers, the pilgrimage of life and the journey to our ultimate goal can prove tiring, as the journey through the desert to the Promised Land was for the people of Israel.” *Francis I*<sup>2</sup>

**December 22, Fourth Sunday of Advent** [*All four candles*]

### **Prayer**

Lord, our God, we praise You for Your Son, Jesus Christ, for He is Emmanuel, the Hope of all people. He is the Wisdom that teaches and guides us. He is the Savior of us all. O Lord, let your blessing come upon us as we light all candles of this wreath. May the wreath and its light be a sign of Christ's promise of salvation. May He come quickly and not delay. We ask this in His holy name. Amen.

### **Meditation**

“I dream of a church that is a mother and shepherdess. The church's ministers must be merciful, take responsibility for the people and accompany them like the good Samaritan, who washes, cleans and raises up his neighbor. This is pure Gospel. ... The ministers of the Gospel must be people who can warm the hearts of the people, who walk through the dark night with them, who know how to dialogue and to descend themselves into their people's night, into the darkness, but without getting lost. The people of God want pastors,...” *Francis I*<sup>3</sup>

### **Prayer for Vocations**<sup>4</sup>

O God, Who wills not the death of a sinner, but rather that he be converted and live, grant we beseech You through the intercession of the Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, Saint Joseph, her spouse, Saint Junipero Serra, and all the saints, an increase of laborers for your Church, fellow laborers with Christ to spend and consume themselves for souls, through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, Who lives and reigns with You, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever.

Amen.

For information on vocations, go to: <https://SerraSpark.org>

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<sup>2</sup> Message for the XXXIX World Youth Day, August 29, 2024

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Pope Francis by Fr Antonio Spadaro, Editor-in-chief of the Jesuit magazine "La Civiltà Cattolica" ("L'Osservatore Romano", 21 September 2013)

<sup>4</sup> Serra Prayer for Vocations