

OLV. Rel. Ed. Newsletter



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December 2023

***December Dates to
Remember***

- Dec. 1: First Friday
- Dec. 2: First Saturday
- Dec. 3: First Sunday of Advent
- Dec. 6: Feast of St. Nicholas
- Dec. 8: Feast of the Immaculate Conception
- Dec. 10: Second Sunday of Advent
- Dec. 12: Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe
- Dec. 13: Feast of St. Lucy
- Dec. 14: Rel. Ed. Class 4
- Dec. 17: Third Sunday of Advent
- Dec. 20: Ember Wednesday
- Dec. 22: Ember Friday
- Dec. 23: Ember Saturday
- Dec. 24: Christmas Eve
- Dec. 25: Nativity of Our Lord

As we welcome December, preparing to invite Jesus into our hearts on Christmas, the feast day of His Birth, we welcome every new gift from God, every opportunity to be reborn in our faith, as children of God who accept life in Christ. Every Christmas, celebrating a time of such joy, we reignite our love for God in our hearts. Our hearts are aglow with hope. December is the Month of the Immaculate Conception. We honor Mother Mary, who was conceived without sin. Because Mother Mary was sinless, She was chosen to give birth to the sinless Son of God. Her clean soul meant She had an Immaculate Heart, a pure Heart, formed to love God with a perfect love. She welcomed God's plan for Her, impossible as it may have seemed, trusting that, with God, nothing is impossible. Since Mary was immaculate, the Holy Spirit could overshadow Her, allowing for Christ to be immaculately formed in Her womb. God knit His love ever more deeply into Mother Mary's Heart by giving Her the greatest gift, His Son.

When we receive Communion, we receive new life in Christ, always being born anew because of His love. The Holy Spirit inspires us, shedding light on the path to Christ. Mother Mary leads us to Christ, showing us how to follow the path to Jesus, to loving Him more, so that we may be in the light of Heaven with Him forever. When Jesus was born, the Bread of Heaven came down to us like the manna in the desert from the Old Testament. God was giving us the love we would need to keep our souls alive: the love of Christ, Who made God's love visible. Jesus was born to save us. His very name means "God saves." Jesus' life would allow us to come face-to-face with God, Who wants to know us personally, Who loves us with the greatest love, a love that we celebrate at Christmas, singing and praising Him with the angels who adore Him. Mother Mary shows us how to humbly love God back, offering His gifts back to Him with the lives of service we live, in the things we do to share His joy in this season, and for all time. May we always shine with the light of Christ, so that we might see the glory of His love within us and around us.

Gloria in excelsis Deo (glory to God in the highest)!

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Prayer on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

Father, the image of Mary is found in your Church.

Mary had a faith that your Spirit prepared and a love that never knew sin, for you kept her sinless from the first moment of her conception.

Trace in our actions the lines of her love, in our hearts her readiness of faith.

Prepare once again a world for your Son who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

Amen.

-adapted from USCCB



🌟 Saint Spotlight: St. Lucy 🌟

Song of the Month:
“Immaculate Mary”

Scripture Spotlight:
“Nothing will be
impossible for God.”
(Luke 1:38)

St. Lucy's feast day is on December 13. Lucy, the saint of the eyes, helps us to see more clearly, by the light of Christ. In fact, her very name means “light.” Many traditions are dedicated to St. Lucy in the month of December, including candlelit processions that remind us to walk in the light of Christ. St. Lucy looked at the world with the eyes of her soul, seeing things with the love with which God looks at us. From the time she was a child, Lucy had great faith in God. She humbly lived as a child of God, listening to His will for her life, much like Mother Mary did. When her mother was very ill, St. Lucy prayed for her, asking St. Agatha for her help. St. Lucy's mother was healed. St. Lucy was grateful to God, giving her thanks by sharing with the poor, and eventually becoming a nun. St. Lucy was willing to give her life for Jesus, and she did. At a time when people were not allowed to practice their faith in Christ, St. Lucy bravely lived out her love for God. She lived in the light, not hiding her love for Jesus. Nothing could put out the love for God in her heart, which was like the bright light of a candle. No matter what, St. Lucy did not give up her faith. She did not let anything lead her away from God. Keeping close to God, St. Lucy could have pure joy in her heart.