



The Days of Advent

THE PROPHECIES
AND PROMISE
OF THE
SAVIOR

Hope is a desire, an expectation. It sustains and nourishes the human spirit. For those who believe in God, Hope is the expectation of what God has promised, as shared in our collective and personal salvation histories.

Advent is the season of Hope. It is a time when we read the prophecies and promises of the Old Testament that will be fulfilled not only in the birth of Jesus but ultimately in his life, death, and resurrection.

Humanity is a primal lot, requiring signs and symbols to give life and life events meaning and context.

The *expectation* of Advent is depicted in the liturgical hue of “violet-blue,” as reflected in the sunset of the winter sky. It is different from the “violet” of Lent.

The *faithfulness* of Advent is present in the greenery of the Advent Wreath made from the boughs of the fir tree, the tree that is “ever green.”

The *strength* of Advent is seen in the light of the candle which revels in its ability to chasten the darkness, bringing light, warmth, and security.

Advent is a season of sublime longing, of hope and desire, without which, we could not comprehend the joy of Christmas.

Let us pray
with longing and waiting
for the coming of the Lord.

Our hearts desire the warmth of God’s love;
our minds are searching for the light of God’s Word.

May our longing give us strength to grow in love
that the dawn of the coming of Our Savior
may find us rejoicing and welcoming the Light of Truth.

*An Advent Calendar
of the
Basilica of the National Shrine
of the
Immaculate Conception*

The First Week of Advent

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Sunday, First Week of Advent

The *tintinnabula* (pl., bells), an emblem of our rank as a minor basilica, is also an emblem of “advent” (Latin, *ad veni*, “to come.”)

In the early days of Christianity the *tintinnabulum* was known as the “*advent* bell.” Carried at the head of a processions, it announced the coming of a ruler or king; its chiming allowed everyone within ear shot “to prepare the way,” much like what we read in the Old Testament.

Today, let us sing:

When the King shall come again

*All his pow’r revealing,
Splendor shall announce his reign,
Life and joy and healing:
Earth no longer in decay,
Hope no more frustrated;
this is God’s redemption day
Longingly awaited.*



Crypt Church
North Apse
Left Arch
Pewabic Angel

Monday, First Week of Advent

Sound the trumpets in Zion, summon the nations;
call the people together and tell them the good news:

Our God and our Savior is coming.

Proclaim the good news, let it be heard;
tell it to everyone, shout it aloud!

Our God and our Savior is coming.

See Joel, 2:15; Isaiah 62: 11; Jeremiah 4: 5.

(Monday, First Week of Advent, Office of Readings, Responsory)

Crypt Church
North Apse
Right Arch
Pewabic Angel





Tuesday, First Week of Advent

This unique Papal Rose, a gift from Pope Benedict XVI (2008) to the National Shrine, is made of hand-forged iron. Each petal, each rose and rosebud is meticulously forged, crafted, and attached by hand and finished in a delicate, old world patina. The soft wood base is hand carved and carries the coat of arms of Pope Benedict XVI.

This is the only papal rose with a “wood stem” that clearly references Isaiah 11:1.

*A shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse,
and from his roots a bud shall blossom.*

See the first reading of the day, Isaiah 11: 1-10.



Wednesday, First Week of Advent

*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
In verdant pastures he gives me repose;
Beside restful waters he leads me;
he refreshes my soul.*

*He guides me in right paths
for his name's sake.
Even though I walk in the dark valley
I fear no evil; for you are at my side
With your rod and your staff
that give me courage.*

(Responsorial Psalm of the day, 23: 1-3)



Thursday, First Week of Advent

Receive, O Virgin Mary, the word which is sent to you from the Lord by the Angel: You shall conceive and shall bring forth God and man together. That you may be called blessed among all woman.

(Thursday, First Week of Advent, Matins, Nocturn I, Lesson i, Response.)

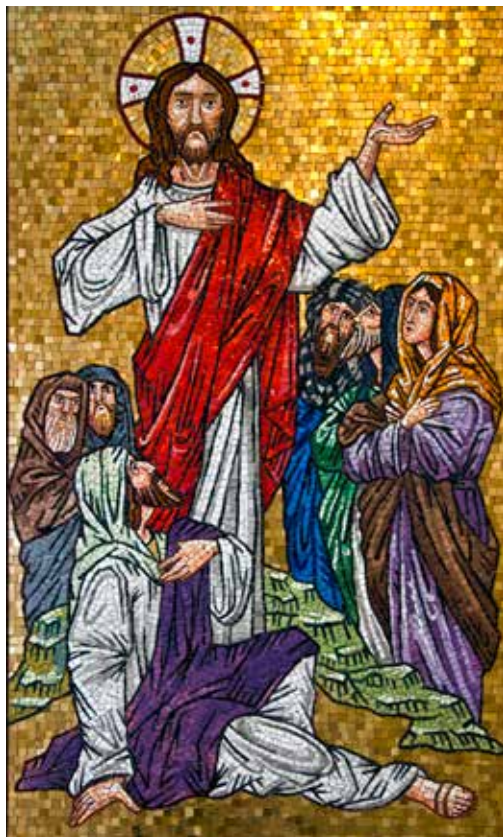
Upper Church, East Transept, tympanum:
Synod of Milan (A.D. 390), Semper Virgo



Friday, First Week of Lent

Thus says the Lord God:
Surely, in a very little while,
Lebanon shall be changed into an orchard
and the orchard be considered a forest!
And out of gloom and darkness,
the eyes of the blind shall see.
The lowly shall again find joy in the LORD,
and the poorest rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.
(Isaiah 29: 17-19; First Reading)

The mosaic of the Cedar of Lebanon is the first symbol that the pilgrim encounters when entering the Chapel of Our Lady of Lebanon. Tradition holds that its timbers were used to build the Temple of Solomon. The “ever-green” Cedar of Lebanon is a symbol of eternal life and of the Virgin Mary



Saturday, First Week of Advent

Jesus went around to all the towns and villages,
teaching in their synagogues,
proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom,
and curing every disease and illness.
(Matthew 9: 35, Gospel of the Day)

The Third Luminous Mystery of the Rosary, as depicted in mosaic in the Chapel of Our Lady of Pompei, is the Proclamation of the Kingdom of God and a call to conversion. As the first week of Advent draws to a close, the Gospel reading of the day reminds us that to go forth and proclaim the Good News of “God with us.”