

# SAINT ANNE OF THE SUNSET

Religious Education Weekly Newsletter  
For the Week of December 3 (Sunday)

FROM CARMEN PERLAS  
COORDINATOR OF RELIGIOUS  
EDUCATION



Seems like only yesterday (as the cliché goes), but the Season of Advent is here once again! It begins on the closest Sunday following the Feast of Saint Andrew, the apostle and martyr. This year, it begins this Sunday December 3, 2023. Growing up in the Philippines, the real meaning of Advent Season has been obscured by the early celebration of the Christmas Season (would you believe, beginning September) with houses, malls and shopping centers with the proliferation of Christmas decorations, lights, shopping and carols being played on the radio. While all these festivities have made my childhood ever so memorable, I could not help but reflect now that there is a spiritual dimension that seemed to have been forgotten, the real meaning of Advent and Christmas.

The word “Advent” is derived from the Latin word, *adventus* or *ad-venire*, meaning coming or anticipation. It refers to the coming of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ at Christmas but goes beyond that, for it encompasses not only the past, present but also the future, His Second Coming at the end of time. And thus, if we meditate deeper into this, we can say that we are always in the advent season, as the date of Christ’s Second Coming is unknown to us (or even to Our Lord Himself). And as a mother, I would tell my children, “BE READY” for we do not know the time and the hour.

The Advent Season refocuses our minds and hearts to being always ready, to be prepared spiritually today and through the end of time. The Church’s Liturgical calendar provides us an opportunity to set aside four weeks of spiritual readiness through penance (Sacrament of Reconciliation), reflection and meditation through prayer and through the examination of our lives (conscience), and a renewed fervor towards change, a conversion process (by working on a better version of ourselves before God and neighbor). It is a period centered on the Light of the World, Jesus Christ, symbolically represented by the three violet (purple) candles (of peace, joy and love), a rose candle (for joy) with a white candle at the center, Jesus Christ.

**FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE  
CONCEPTION – December 8 – Friday, A  
Holy Day of Obligation – Please attend  
the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass!**



It’s a beautiful start of our first week of Advent, that we also commemorate the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception in honor of Mary, the mother of our Savior, for without her fiat, the whole world would still be in darkness. The Immaculate Conception was declared a dogma of the Church on December 8, 1854, declared by Pope Pius IX (*Ineffabilis Deus*), in which he states the following: *“We declare, pronounce and define that the doctrine which asserts that the Blessed Virgin Mary, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God, and in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, Saviour of the human race, was preserved free from every stain of original sin is a doctrine revealed by God and, for this reason, must be firmly and constantly believed by all the faithful”*

## Reflections from Today's Gospel Reading Mark 13:33-37



Our Lord Jesus Christ, once again used a parable to tell a lesson for his disciples (and to the world) on the significance of spiritual readiness or preparation. In this parable, Jesus tells a story of a man travelling abroad (perhaps a wealthy business man, in today's world), and leaves his home or household to the care of his servants and orders the gatekeeper to be on the watch! Watch for what? Well, the master of the house may come home at any time – in the evening, midnight or the morning and may find the servants and the gatekeeper asleep. For us this parable serves a great lesson on being ready spiritually for the Second Coming of Christ. Are we ready to account for our life – all our good deeds (and bad). Are we ready face our judgement day before our Lord Jesus Christ. Some people may take this “being ready” parable in a negative way as it does instill some fear in us – what if I am not ready? For me however, I find this truly comforting, an act of love and solicitude from Our Lord – that He loves us so much, He could not bear losing any of us. It is a story of hope through what I would like to call, perseverance in our faith journey. Thus, through prayer and fasting we can all strive to a life of holiness, each day calling upon God to help us remain in His grace till the end of time.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*St. Anne of the Sunset*

*Christmas Giving Tree*

Remember to stop by the Giving Tree on the church altar to select an ornament! Your gift will support Catholic Charities' families in need. They are requesting \$25 gift cards to Target or Safeway.

**Giving Tree** - We have more opportunities to share our love with our brothers and sisters through Saint Anne's Annual Giving Tree project. Remember to stop by the Giving Tree located in the Church and select an ornament. Catholic Charities is requesting \$25 gift cards from Target or Safeway.

### Family Nativity & Choir

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Christmas 5PM Vigil Mass  
St. Anne of the Sunset  
850 Judah

All are welcome!

To sign up, for more information  
[stannesunset@gmail.com](mailto:stannesunset@gmail.com)

Please join our parish annual Family Nativity and Choir at 5:00 pm Vigil Mass on December 24. We are in need of a Holy Family that will depict Saint Joseph, the Blessed Virgin Mary and Jesus.

### BREAKFAST & PHOTOS WITH SANTA & MRS CLAUS!

JOIN US

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10TH  
AFTER 10AM MASS IN THE LOWER HALL.

Free Community Event!  
Please bring your family for  
photos with Santa, have breakfast  
and enjoy your morning with  
the community of St. Anne!

FOR MORE INFO - TO RSVP  
[MGLIWANAG@MAC.COM](mailto:MGLIWANAG@MAC.COM)

ALL ARE WELCOME!  
HOSTED BY SAPTO  
ST ANNE PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

### FAMILY CHRISTMAS CAROLING

1390 14TH AVENUE, WEEKLY PRACTICE IN DECEMBER  
DAY & TIME TBC, BASED ON MAJORITY'S SCHEDULE

JOIN THE  
FAMILY CAROLING FUN  
& OPPORTUNITIES TO  
SERVE THE COMMUNITY

WITH MUSIC DIRECTOR,  
RANDELL RENTAR  
& VOCALIST  
CASSANDRA CONDE!

INNER SUNSET FAMILIES  
ALL ARE WELCOME!

STANNESUNSET@GMAIL.COM  
TO SIGN UP OR  
FOR MORE INFORMATION