



ARCHDIOCESE
OF
SAINT PAUL &
MINNEAPOLIS

S.P.A.

SINGLE PARENTS
IN THE
ARCHDIOCESE OF
SAINT PAUL AND
MINNEAPOLIS

NOV / DEC 2011

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Single Parent Retreat

Maternity of the
Blessed Virgin
St. Paul
Saturday,
February 4, 2012
9-12:00 p.m.

Lenten Women's Retreat

*"Finding Christ in
the Desert"*
Fr. Michael Keating
Saturday,
February 25, 2012
8-9:00 a.m.
registration/light
breakfast
9-12:00 p.m. Retreat
Holy Spirit
St. Paul, MN

Spring Parenting Forum

Jim Stenson
Saturday,
March 24, 2012
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
St. Peter
Mendota, MN

Men's Conference

With Matthew Kelly
Saturday,
March 31, 2012
7:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Cathedral of St. Paul
St. Paul, MN

For additional
information or to
register on-line for
an event visit
www.archspm.org

Why Celebrate Advent?

By Deacon Keith Fournier, www.catholic.org



"We know that there are three comings of the Lord. The third lies between the other two. It is invisible while the other two are visible. In the first coming He was seen on earth, dwelling among men; ... in the final coming "all flesh will see the salvation of our God and they will look upon Him whom they have pierced". The intermediate coming is a hidden one; in it only the elect see the Lord within their own selves, and they are saved. In His first coming our Lord came in our flesh and our weakness; in this middle coming He comes in Spirit and in power; in the final coming he will be seen in glory and in majesty. Because this coming lies between the other two, it is like a road on which we travel from the first

coming to the last." (St. Bernard of Clairveaux)

Advent has begun! Many Catholic families will bring the advent wreath out of storage and set it in a prominent place on the dining room table. As often as practicable over these four weeks preceding Christmas, we will gather as a family, light a candle, recite a prayer and sing together- inviting the

Pray to St. Andrew this Christmas season – starting Thursday, December 1st!

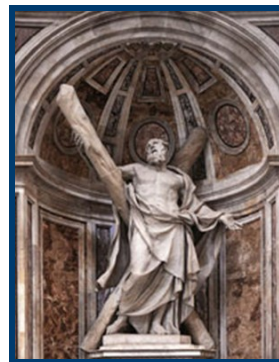
Nov. 30 is the Feast of St. Andrew the Apostle – in the Western and Eastern Churches. It's also the day we begin a different kind of novena of the Apostles and the brother of

When Catholics hear "novena," While many novenas are prayers nine days, the word novena is used series of days – not just over nine

That is good to know because the tionally prayed from his feast day, it concludes. That's one of a few

Christmas Novena. Another is that we do not pray to St. Andrew for his intercession. The Novena Prayer is a prayer to God. Finally, the traditional praying of the Novena involves saying the following short prayer 15 times daily.

Saint Andrew Christmas Novena Prayer – Hail and blessed be the hour and moment in which the Son of God was born of the most pure Virgin Mary, at midnight, in Bethlehem, in piercing cold. In that hour, vouchsafe, O my God! to hear my prayer and grant my desires, through the merits of Our Savior Jesus Christ, and of His Blessed Mother. Amen.



to God in honor of St. Andrew, the first St. Peter.

many immediately think, "nine days." intended to be said over a period of to describe any prayer repeated over a days.

St. Andrew Christmas Novena is tradi- Nov. 30, through Christmas Eve, when "differences" about the St. Andrew



Spend Less Money This Holiday Season. Buy Only What You Can Really Afford This Year

Story by: Jennifer Wolfe
About.com

The holidays require a lot of planning, from wish lists, to shopping lists, baking lists, and more. But the very first thing you need to do is decide up front how much money you can afford to spend on the holidays this year. Let's take a moment to rethink the meaning of gift-giving and consider some creative options to help you spend less money and make this holiday season more enjoyable and less stressful for your entire family.

Avoid Buying Holiday Gifts on Credit

Save money this holiday season by spending only what you have in your bank account. This means not using credit to purchase gifts! When you buy a \$20 gift on credit, you're basically telling the credit card company that you'll pay them back that \$20, plus another 20% or so in interest - each month - until the balance is paid off. That means that unless you're able to pay off the balance of your credit card in full when the next bill arrives, you could still be paying for that \$20 gift thirty years from now!

Examine Your Intentions

What is the point of gift-giving? Is it to reciprocate the dollar amount of a gift that was given to us, or one that we think might be given to us in the future? No! The point is to acknowledge that other person's positive influence on your life. "Thank you" and "I love you" are phrases that don't come with dollar amounts attached to them, so don't allow yourself to be caught up in spending more on holiday gifts than you can afford.

Develop Your Own Gift Guidelines

There are lots of ways to temper the "gimmies" our kids can be so prone to during the holidays. Consider setting a specific dollar amount for each child, and sticking to it. Or decide that you'll limit the number of gifts to three items per child. Remember, there are always going to be people who will spend more on their kids, but attempting to "keep up with the Jones" comes with a heavy price. Teach your children early that thoughtful gifts don't have to cost a lot of money, and what's most important is appreciating all that we've been given already.

Keep Track of Your Spending

Spend less money by using a holiday planning worksheet to keep track of all the gifts you intend to buy or make, and record the amount of money you'll spend on each person. This simple tool can help you stay within your spending budget and actually enjoy the months that follow the holidays.

Consider Your Options

If you're on a limited budget, consider making gifts for everyone on your list. This can be a fun project for the kids, and it can really help you spend less money during the holidays. Homemade gifts like bread, cookies, candy, or fudge are delicious, thoughtful ways to convey a "Thank you" or let someone know how special they are to you. You can also save a lot of money by purchasing nearly-new items on eBay or asking several relatives to "go in on" a special gift with you.

Being creative and keeping your mind focused on the real meaning of gift-giving will help you keep the culture's "buy more" influence at bay, and help you spend less money this the holiday season.

General Prayer Intentions From The Holy Father

General Intention: Peace among All Peoples. That all peoples may grow in harmony and peace through mutual understanding and respect.

Missionary Intention: That children and young people may be messengers of the Gospel and that they may be respected and preserved from all violence and exploitation.

Why Celebrate Advent? Continued from page 1

coming of the Lord into our lives. So will millions of Christians the world over.

The word "Advent" is derived from the Latin words, "ad-venio" or "adventus", which both signify a coming. It is a liturgical "season" in the Catholic Church and has birthed important customs in Catholic faith and life. Customs that form a framework, a texture that is meant to bring faith to life and form patterns for our daily lives which can move us forward in the Christian life.

The actual celebration of Advent as a season of preparation for Christmas dates back as early as the fourth century. It has grown throughout the history of the Western Church to become a significant part of the pattern of life, faith, culture and worship that is Catholic Christianity.

For four special weeks, preceding the great celebration of the Incarnation, the Nativity of the Lord Jesus, ("Christ-Mass"), many western Christians (Catholics and others) are invited to prepare, to "get ready", to anticipate His coming(s).

Again this year my family will attend the Sunday Vigil Mass and we will sing the ever-familiar hymn "O Come, O Come Emmanuel". That song (and others) will become the backdrop of the season, sticking in our minds individually and collectively. I know the tune will be hummed and do what music does when it is repeated, get down deep into our subconscious. It may even become "annoying"- as music can also become. Even that annoyance, however, gets to the root of Catholic life and faith. It is, as they say in the Internet world, "granular" Christianity, getting down experientially into your bones.

Catholicism is "earthy", "real", "incarnational" Christianity.

Soon the "liturgical air" will be filled with the beautiful "O Antiphons", derived from the Old Testament Hebrew Scriptures, in the Prophetic and Wisdom Books, that will be sung as a part of the formal "Liturgy of the Hours" beginning seven days before the Vigil of Christmas.

These short prayers are found in the Liturgy of the Hours, or Breviary, which all clergy, most religious orders, and increasing numbers of lay men and women use as the structure for their daily prayer throughout the western Catholic world.

As a Deacon of the Church, I will wear lavender vestments when I serve at the altar. Lavender is a color that connotes both repentance, and expectation. Therein, displayed in that color, lies the "heart", the "spirit" of the season. It is a time to "get ready" and to build up the hope within our hearts for the promised coming!

Every year, Catholic Christians repeat together-experientially-through our "liturgy" (which means the "work" of worship) the pattern of the Christian life. We walk through the great events of Christian history, corporate and individual, and we seek to inculcate the "mystery" that is the Christian faith, more deeply within our lives in the real world.

We seek to build a "way" -a pattern- of daily Christian living with our customs, practices, and celebrations. During Advent, the Church, as a mother, calls us all to get ready, to clean the house, to set special times aside, so that we will be ready for all of His comings!

The Sacred Scripture texts that we will hear at "Mass" (the Divine Liturgy) will be filled with the great figures, such as John the Baptist, who embody the call of repentance and "preparing the way" for all who live between the first and the final coming of Jesus.

The Old and New Testament passages will be beautifully juxtaposed in every liturgy and in our formal prayer ("The Liturgy of the Hours") in order to point to all the "comings" as St Bernard so insightfully wrote about.

The faithful will be invited to experience the extraordinary graces found in the full smorgasbord of sacramental and liturgical services. However, ultimately, it will come down to each person, each family, accepting the invitation to prepare for the coming.

As I grow older, I love being a Catholic Christian more and more. I remember reading a newspaper article in an airport many years ago in which a priest wrote that Catholicism was "religion for the long haul." I see the truth of that assertion more as the years fly by.

Oh, I know that some other Christians have come to think that such practices as Advent are "empty ritual"; and perhaps for some, that is what it has become. But for me, it is always a continual call back to faith, repentance...to the things that really matter. The ritual has been like a form into which the freshness of the Spirit can be poured. The familiar pattern presents a framework for shaping family life, customs, and piety.

I know that as life goes on, kids get raised, parents die, grandchildren come... I need to hear the continual call to "prepare the way for the Lord." I need these special times of grace. I need these holy seasons. Unlike my earlier years when I thought I had it all "figured out", I find something quite different has occurred as my hair grayed and I continue on in my life of faith.

I realize how little I know... and how much conversion I need. The seasons of the Catholic Church and our life together are an extraordinary gift and opportunity. After all, human beings are going to mark time. Period. We will fill it either with ourselves or with the things of God.

Why celebrate Advent? I say because we need it. Bring on the candles, the songs, the colors, and the seasons, bring on the special times, and fill the air with the special smells.... I love it all. Advent is a road, a way, a symbol of the heart of the Christian life and vocation. We live in that intermediate time between the first and the second comings. We are to be changed by the first and to prepare ourselves- and the world- for the second. During the process- He continues to come to those who make themselves ready.

Upcoming Events:

Single Parent Retreat

February 4, 2012

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Optional Mass at 8:00 a.m. - Registration begins at 8:30 a.m.

\$10.00 per family (scholarships are available)

Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

1414 Dale Street, St. Paul, MN 55117

This morning of reflection is meant to provide Christian support and renewal for single parents through presentation, fellowship and meaningful discussion. Fr. Al Backmann, retired priest of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, father and grandfather will speak on *"Parenting Before and After..."* followed by a presentation from Joseph Pribyl, psychotherapist from Quo Vadis Therapy Center (Where are you going?). Mr. Pribyl will bring his unique ability to help us to *"Know yourself and your purpose through relationships"*.

Registration form and more information can be found at: www.archspm.org or by calling 651.291.4489

Annual Lenten Women's Retreat~ Finding Christ in the Desert

Saturday, February 25, 2012

8:00 a.m. ~ 12:00 p.m.

Holy Spirit Church, 515 Albert Street South, St. Paul, MN Cost: \$10.00

Keynote speaker of the day...

Fr. Michael Keating

Associate Professor, Catholic Studies
University of St. Thomas

A Retreat of Reflection and Renewal:

- ◆ **Registration & Continental Breakfast**
- ◆ **Lenten Reflections:**
 - Driven with Jesus by the Spirit into the Desert
 - Allured by Christ in the Desert
- ◆ **Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament**
- ◆ **Sacrament of Reconciliation**
- ◆ **A Walk with the Blessed Mother: Stations of the Cross**
- ◆ **Holy Mass**
- ◆ **Cost is \$10.00/person**
- ◆ **Registration due by Friday, February 17, 2012**

For additional information or a registration form please visit www.archspm.org/family or call 651.291.4489.



Game of Your Life is only days away...

Gather up your family, and be sure to tune in for **Game of Your Life** on NBC at 8/7c on Friday, Dec. 2, 2011. The movie is a lighthearted and colorful “techy drama” that recognizes the importance of loyalty, family and friendship when four college students embark on what might be their biggest challenge yet!

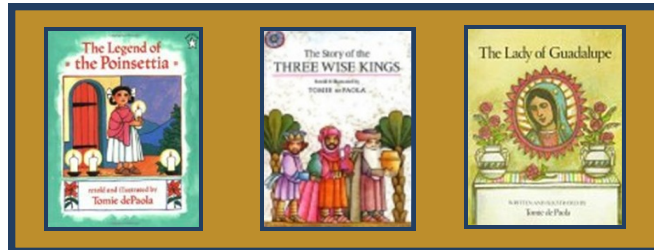
The ninth movie in the Family Movie Night initiative produced by Procter & Gamble (NYSE: PG) and Walmart (NYSE: WMT), **Game of Your Life** stars Titus Makin Jr. (Glee), Nathan Kress (iCarly) and Lea Thompson (Back to the Future).

Sr. Rose Pacatte, a member of the Daughters of St. Paul and the director of the Pauline Center for Media Studies in Los Angeles, has endorsed **Game of Your Life**. “Parents could profit from watching this film because it explains so much about video games, their design and the fascination of young people with them...in a good way,” Pacatte said. “It is an interesting story, maybe the best or second-best of the [Family Movie Night] series so far.”

Read a Good Book Lately?

Children’s Literature

From Advent through Christmas, by: Tomie de Paola:



Merry Christmas, Strega Nona, for first Sunday of Advent

Country Angel Christmas, Feast of St. Nicholas, December 6

Lady of Guadalupe, Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, December 12, and The Legend of the Poinsettia

Closer to Christmas, Clown of God and Jingle the Christmas Clown

Mary, the Mother of Jesus, Feast of Mary, the Mother of God, January 1

Christmas to Epiphany, The Story of the Three Wise Kings and The Legend of Old Befana

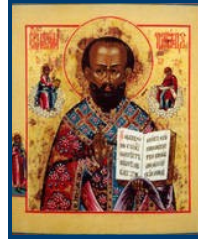
-from <http://charlottesmason.tripod.com/4realpaola.htm>

Saints, Mary & Holy Days

Saint Nicholas - December 6th

December 6 is the Feast of Saint Nicholas, of course, the model for our modernity was legendary.

Saint Nicholas is the patron saint of the very important to Eastern Catholics and between the start of Philip's Fast--the East-with Advent--and Christmas, the Feast austerity of this "little Lent."



las of Myra, a bishop from the fourth century. He day Santa Claus, because Saint Nicholas's generosity

Byzantine Catholic Church, and his feast day is Eastern Orthodox. Positioned about halfway between Christian time of preparation that coincides of Saint Nicholas provides some relief from the

The night before Saint Nicholas Day, children place their shoes in a prominent location--say, by a fireplace, or outside their bedroom door. The next morning--usually very early--the children find their shoes filled with little presents from the great saint. Like many Advent customs, the celebration of Saint Nicholas Day reminds us that Advent is a time of preparation for the birth of Christ. The love of Saint Nicholas, while great, pales in comparison with the love that Christ has for all of mankind.



Feast of the Immaculate Conception - December 8th ~ Holy Day of Obligation ~

Few doctrines of the Catholic Church are as misunderstood as the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. Many people, including many Catholics, think that it refers to the conception of Christ through the action of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. That event, though, is celebrated at the feast of the Annunciation of the Lord (March 25, nine months before Christmas). What is the Immaculate Conception? The Immaculate Conception refers to the condition that the Blessed Virgin Mary was free from Original Sin from the very moment of her conception in the womb of her mother, Saint Anne. We celebrate the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary on September 8; nine months before is December 8, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

Christmas - December 25th ~ Holy Day of Obligation ~

The word *Christmas* derives from the combination of *Christ* and *Mass*; it is the feast of the Nativity of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Second in the liturgical calendar only to Easter, Christmas is celebrated by many as if it were the most important of Christian feasts. History of Christmas:

People are often surprised to find that Christmas was not celebrated by the earliest Christians. The custom was to celebrate a saint's birth into eternal life—in other words, his death. Thus Good Friday (Christ's death) and Easter Sunday (His Resurrection) took center stage.

To this day, the Church celebrates only three birthdays: Christmas; the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary; and the Birth of John the Baptist. The common thread in the celebrations is that all three were born without sin: Christ, because He was the Son of God; Mary, because she was sanctified by God in the Immaculate Conception; and John the Baptist, because his leap in the womb of his mother, Elizabeth, at the Visitation is seen as a type of Baptism (and thus, even though John was conceived with Original Sin, he was cleansed of that sin before birth).

It took a while, though, for the Church to develop the feast of Christmas. While it may have been celebrated in Egypt as early as the third century, it did not spread throughout the Christian world until the middle of the fourth century. It was first celebrated along with Epiphany, on January 6; but slowly Christmas was separated out into its own feast, on December 25. Many of the early Church Fathers regarded this as the actual date of Christ's birth, though it does coincide with the Roman festival of *Natalis Invicti* (the winter solstice, which the Romans celebrated on December 25), and the Catholic Encyclopedia does not reject the possibility that the date was chosen as "a deliberate and legitimate 'baptism' of a pagan feast."

By the middle of the sixth century, Christians had begun to observe Advent, the season of preparation for Christmas, with fasting; and the 12 days of Christmas, from Christmas Day to Epiphany, had become established.

Out & About...



Santaland, the annual Holiday show at Macy's, has been running for almost 50 years. The Macy's store on Nicollet Mall in downtown Minneapolis puts on the show every year. 2011 is the 49th Santaland Show.

The theme is "A Day in the Life of an Elf", reprising the same subject of the last couple of years. Animatronic puppets depict elves as they prepare for Christmas at the North Pole.

Macy's Santaland opens on November 11. It is open daily until December 30, with the exception of Thanksgiving Day, November 24. **Admission to Macy's Santaland is free.** But, prepare for queues during busy times, like Saturdays - visit during weekdays or other less busy shopping times if possible.



Open Skate (subject to change):

- Monday-Thursday 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.
- Friday 11 a.m. – 10 p.m.
- Saturday 11 a.m. – 10 p.m.
- Sunday 11 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Skaters are invited to experience the unique urban setting of downtown Saint Paul. Located in the heart of the city, **Wells Fargo WinterSkate** creates a fun, winter experience for visitors of all ages. The historic Landmark Center creates a beautiful backdrop for the outdoor rink, showcasing Saint Paul's charming European architecture and old-world ambiance.

Wells Fargo invite you and your whole family to dust off your skates and head to downtown Saint Paul. The outdoor rink will be filled with noontime skaters, after school groups, youth hockey scrimmages and practices, broomball teams, corporate events, and family open skating. Open November 26th - February 5th. Closed: Dec. 25, Jan 1. Limited Hours on Dec. 24, Dec. 31, Jan 16.

Holidazzle Parade

A free family event now celebrating its 20th season!

Once again it's time to bundle up the kids, pick up the grandparents and head to the Target Holidazzle Parade. Every year since 1992, when the first parade marched down Nicollet Mall, over 300,000 spectators converge on downtown Minneapolis to join the sparkling fun.

This year's parade begins Friday, November 25, at 6:30 pm.

Thrilling the crowds on Nicollet Mall from 12th Street to 4th Street, Target Holidazzle continues Thursdays through Sundays until December 18. Brave the wind chill and watch streetside, or keep warm in the "Hot Seats" or downtown skyways.

Be a part of the magic and watch a dazzling fireworks show near Peavey Plaza to celebrate the kick-off of the 20th season of Target Holidazzle! Completely reimagined, this year's display will be a full-fledged sensational show! Pyrotechnic technology similar to what is used to highlight events such as the Super Bowl and World Series will be used to bring colourful effects including, aerial bursts, mines, comets, glittering starts and holiday colors! The Target Holidazzle parade begins at 6:30 p.m. but parade-goers will want to get downtown early to catch the captivating blaze of the holiday season!

Opening Weekend Only!



The St. Paul Winter Carnival:

King Boreas Grande Day Parade - January 28, 2012, 2:00 p.m. start. Free and open to the public. Location: Smith Street High Bridge to Rice Park along W. 7th Street.

Many more events and fun activities can be found at <http://volunteer.winter-carnival.comug/month.php>



Laura's Hot Cocoa Mix

www.christmas-cookies.com/recipes/recipe368.lauras-hot-cocoa-mix.html

by Leslie Sausage

- 2 cups nonfat dry milk
 - 1 cup sugar
 - 1/2 cup cocoa
 - 1/2 cup non-dairy creamer
 - 1 dash of salt
 - miniature marshmallows, optional
- Combine ingredients and mix well. Store in an

tight container. Yield 4 cups mix

To make Laura's Hot Cocoa Mix:

Add 3 to 4 tablespoons of mix to your favorite mug and fill with boiling water. Stir blend. Add some marshmallows or cream.

Sometimes we like to add some miniature marshmallows to the mix and then fill a quart jar with the cocoa mix and miniature marshmallows combination. The marshmallows dry and get firm, but soften when hot water is added.

For gift giving, one year we used clean one-quart mayonnaise jars for the cocoa mix. On red paper, my son wrote the directions and added a cute poem. He cut it out with pinking shears and glued it onto the jar. We used regular canning lids and rings for the jars rather than the mayonnaise lids. Add a circle of holiday fabric, which has been trimmed with pinking shears and tie with some raffia or ribbon. You can also attach a peppermint stick or candy cane to top of the jar with the raffia or ribbon. This gift is always well received!

Gift Tag Ideas:

Wishing you a Warm and Wonderful Christmas!

Wishing you a Warm and Wonderful Holiday Season!

Snowman Soup
 When the weather outside is frightful,
 Snowman Soup can be delightful.
 May it warm your spirit and your soul.
 Let it Snow, Let it Snow, Let it Snow!
 When you feel a chill or burrrrrr,
 Use the peppermint stick to stir.
 Add hot water and sip it slow.

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to



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*"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday,
today and forever." HEB. 13:8*

