

## Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Church Uses *A Jesse Tree This Advent/Christmastime*

A beautiful Advent custom and great teaching tool for children and the young of heart is a *Jesse Tree*. Each ornament highlights one of the many ways God prepared us through the covenants of old for the new and eternal covenant ratified by His Son. Create or simply meditate on each ornament found in this year's Advent Calendar; marvel at God's awesome plan for our salvation. For as Saint Paul wrote:

*"Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How inscrutable are his judgments and how unsearchable his ways."*

*[Romans 11:33]*

But through Christ and His Church we can know and even begin to understand God's plan so that we can enjoy its benefits! Happy Advent!

*Rev. Thomas J. Serafin, KHS, Pastor*

### Blessing & Lighting of an Advent Wreath

*The leader leads all in the Sign of the Cross:*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

Blessed be God, who enlightens every heart.  
*Blessed be God for ever.*

My brothers and sisters, in this holy time of Advent, we open our hearts to God's love as we prepare to welcome Christ into our lives and homes. The candles of this wreath remind us that Jesus Christ came to conquer the darkness of sin and to lead us into the light of His glorious kingdom. Let us listen to God's Word. *(Another person proclaims the Scripture reading.)*

A reading from the first Letter of Saint John  
*[1 John 1:5-7]*

Now this is the message  
that we have heard from him  
and proclaim to you: God is light,  
and in him there is no darkness at all.

If we say, "We have fellowship with him,"  
while we continue to walk in darkness,  
we lie and do not act in truth.

But if we walk in the light as he is in the light,  
then we have fellowship with one another,  
and the blood of his Son Jesus  
cleanses us from all sin.

The word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

### Universal Prayer

*Others offer the intentions after the leader begins:*

Christ came to bring us salvation and has promised to come again. Let us pray that we may be ready to welcome Him. Our response is, *"Come, Lord Jesus."*

- \* That the keeping of Advent may open our hearts to God's love; we pray:
- \* That the light of Christ may penetrate the darkness of sin; we pray:
- \* That this wreath may constantly remind us to prepare for Christ's coming; we pray:
- \* That the Christmas season may fill us with joy and peace as we strive to follow the example of Jesus; we pray:

*Other intentions may be added; then the leader says:*

With longing for the coming of God's Kingdom, let us pray as Jesus taught us: *Our Father ...*

*Then the leader continues:*

Lord God, your Church joyfully awaits the coming of its Savior, who enlightens our hearts and dispels the darkness of sin and ignorance. Pour forth your blessings upon us as we light the candle[s] of this wreath; may their light reflect the splendor of Christ, who is Lord, for ever and ever. *Amen. (Light the first candle; each week an additional candle is lighted.)*

*All make the Sign of the Cross as the leader prays:*

May the light of Christ lead us to the joy of his kingdom, now and for ever. *Amen.*

### Advent Prayers Before Meals

Let us pray. Bless us, O Lord, and these your gifts, which we are about to receive, from your goodness. Through Christ our Lord. *Amen. -or-*

God, the Father of mercies, you willed your Son to take flesh, in order to give life back to us. Bless these, your gifts, with which we are about to nourish our bodies, so that, receiving new strength, we may wait in watchfulness for the glorious coming of Christ. Through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

### Advent Prayers After Meals

Let us pray. We give you thanks for all your benefits, O Almighty God, who lives and reigns for ever; and may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. *Amen. -or-*

- V.* Let us live soberly, justly, and devoutly in this world.
- R.* *As we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.*

Let us pray. We thank you, all-powerful God, for your kindness in refreshing our bodies by these gifts from your providence. Strengthen us, we pray, not only in body, but also in spirit. Through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



**The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary  
National Patronal Feast Day**

Wear something BLUE as we honor Mary under her title *The Immaculate Conception* Patroness of the USA

Masses for this Holy Day of Obligation are:  
Thursday, December 7

**5:00 pm**

Friday, December 8

**6:30 & 9:00 am & 7:30 pm**

**CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE**

**Christmas Eve  
December 24**

**4:00 pm & 6:00 pm**

**Solemn Christmas Mass: 10:00 pm**

*This Solemn Mass begins with Lessons & Carols at 10:00 pm.*



**Christmas Day: December 25**

***SPECIAL Mass Schedule:***

**9:30 am & 11:30 am only**

*Note: NO 8:00 am Mass on Christmas Day!*

**The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph**

**Sunday, December 31, 2017**

**Regular Weekend Mass Schedule**

**Come to church to pray as a family today.**

**Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God -  
New Year's Day 2018**

***SPECIAL Mass schedule:***

**NO VIGIL MASS December 31, 2017**

**Monday, January 1, 2018**

**9:30 am - 11:30 am only**

**Epiphany Pageant: January 6, 2018  
after the 5:00 pm Mass at 6:00 pm**

**The Epiphany of the Lord**

**January 7, 2018**

***REGULAR weekend Mass schedule***

**Church un-decorating and clean up  
right after the 11:30 am Mass.**

***Lots of hands and strong backs are needed!***

**The Baptism of the Lord**

**January 8: last day of Christmastime**

***Regular 9:00 am Monday Mass only.***

**Ash Wednesday: February 14, 2018**

***Ashes distributed at 6:30 am - 9:00 am***

***12:00 noon - 5:00 pm - 7:30 pm***

**Daily Eucharist**

Receiving daily Eucharist is a good way to spiritually enter Advent.

**Sunday Obligation Masses:**

**Saturday evening: 5:00 pm**

**Sunday: 8:00 am - 9:30 am - 11:30 am**

**Weekday Mass:**

**Monday through Friday at 9:00 am**

**Sacrament of Reconciliation [Confession]**

All should celebrate the Sacrament of Penance or Reconciliation [also called Confession] to remove whatever hinders Christ's Light from shining through them! Confessions are heard:

**Saturdays at 4:00 pm on  
12/02 - 12/09 - 12/16 - 12/23**

***All MUST arrive before 4:00 pm!***

*[Note: due to the 5:00 pm Mass, Confessions MUST END by 4:30 pm, so arrive early!]*

**Advent Penance Service:**

**Wednesday - December 20 - 7:30 pm**

Several Priests will be available for individual confession after a communal examination of conscience; this is NOT General Absolution.

**Church Decorating: All Hands On Deck!**

**Sunday, December 17 - after the 11:30 am Mass**

Many hands and strong backs are needed to decorate our worship space and property; leave your name and phone number with Jackie [908-782-1475 x 1110] so we can give you a job to do!