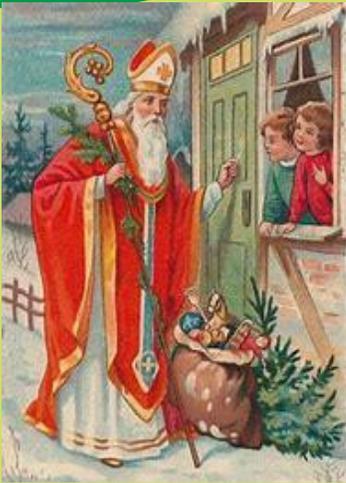


# OLV Rel. Ed. Newsletter



Vol. 1, Issue No. 2

December 2022: Joy



**\*December Dates to Remember\***

- Dec. 1: Class Session 1
- Dec. 4: Second Sunday of Advent
- Dec. 6: Feast Day of St. Nicholas
- Dec. 8: Immaculate Conception (Holy Day of Obligation)
- Dec. 11: Third Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday)
- Dec. 12: Our Lady of Guadalupe
- Dec. 18: Fourth Sunday of Advent
- Dec. 25: Nativity of the Lord (Christmas Day: Holy Day of Obligation)

\*see our bulletins for Mass times:  
<https://olveasthampton.org/bulletins/>

Advent is now upon us, and as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ, we open our hearts to the joy of the season. We consider the great love of God to send His only Son to be among us- through Christ's birth, we are given the opportunity for new life, too.

On December 6, we observe the feast day of St. Nicholas, who captures the season's joy in how he modeled Christ's charity- he was happy to give, because of his love for God. Both this month's prayer and saint spotlight focus on the gifts God gives us, and how we share these. Ultimately, God is our greatest gift; it is from Him that all love, all joy, flows.

Our monthly challenge for December is to complete a special act of kindness that will spread joy, illuminating the love of God for the people around us. Bringing joy to others helps us to grow in our own joy. Perhaps, as a family, you will make Christmas cards to send to neighbors, bake cookies for a friend, or spend time visiting with someone in need. In community, united in our love for God, we find the fullness of joy. Whatever you may choose to do, let it be done with joy, given from the heart, in the spirit of Christ.

May you have a blessed Advent, friends!

-Katie Sadakierski

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<https://olveasthampton.org/religious-education/>

# Advent Family Prayer

God of Love,  
Your son, Jesus, is your greatest gift to us.  
He is a sign of your love.  
Help us walk in that love during the weeks of Advent,  
As we wait and prepare for His coming.  
We pray in the name of Jesus, our Savior. Amen.

*Prayer Source: Xavier University*



Celebrate the season by lighting a candle in your Advent wreath on each Sunday of Advent (the pink candle is for Gaudete Sunday, Dec. 11. It symbolizes joy as we reach the midpoint of Advent- halfway to Christmas!)

## Saint Spotlight: St. Nicholas

St. Nicholas was born in what is now known as the country of Turkey, living from approximately 270 A.D. to 343 A.D. He gave all he had to people in need, and cared for the sick. When St. Nicholas became a bishop, he continued his ministry of kindness, joyfully serving others like Jesus did. While orphaned as a child, St. Nicholas would go on to become a spiritual father to many, teaching children about God, their Father in Heaven, through his loving service to the community. For this reason, St. Nicholas is a patron saint of children. Known for his generosity, St. Nicholas is remembered today when people celebrate his feast on December 6 through gift-giving traditions. One tradition is for children to leave their shoes out to be filled with coins, candies, and cards on the night before St. Nicholas Day. Another tradition is to say a blessing over candy canes before placing them on the Christmas tree, since the shape of the candy cane resembles the crozier (shepherd's staff) carried by bishops like St. Nicholas. Others honor St. Nicholas' charitable spirit by donating items to those in need, such as through participating in food or toy drives.

Scripture Spotlight: "And the angel said to them: Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great **joy**, that shall be to all the people: For, this day, is born to you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord..."

-Luke 2:10-11 (DRA)

Song of the Month: "Joy to the World"

