

# Coloma Catholic Life.

## Liturgical Year

3rd Week of Advent – Gaudéte Sunday Liturgical colour – Rose



## Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for December Entrusted to the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network

### The Future of the Very Young

That every country take the measures necessary to prioritize the future of the very young, especially those who are suffering

## Liturgical Colour – Rose (or violet)

Rose is a lighter version of violet, because today the penitential violet is mixed with the white of the approaching festival. It is part of human nature that we cannot go on being penitent for a long time, or we sink into a settled and insincere gloom rather than working at the definite and active spiritual exercise called penance. The Church knows human nature, and both in Advent and Lent there is a moment where the atmosphere of penance and preparation is brightened by a shaft of light from the glorious season we are preparing ourselves for.

The third Sunday of Advent tells us '*Gaudéte, rejoice!*' because the Lord is near and the fourth Sunday of Lent says '*Laetáre, Jerusalem, be joyful, Jerusalem, and all who love her!*' because she herself is loved by the Lord. On Gaudéte and Laetare Sundays, therefore, the dark penitential violet may be lightened to what the documents call 'rose' but most laymen would call 'pink'.

## Pope Francis Tweet

"May the Virgin Mary help us so that, as we approach Christmas, we do not allow ourselves to be distracted by external things, but make room in our hearts for the One who has already come and wants to come again to heal our illnesses and give us his joy."



## Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for December

In his prayer intention for the month of December 2019, Pope Francis calls us to pray that every country decides to take necessary measures to make the future of children a priority, especially the

## Upcoming Events

### 18th December

Coloma Carol Service  
6:30pm Croydon Minister

### 20<sup>th</sup> December – End of term

Masses in the school hall.

## Prayer of the Month:

### Advent Prayer:

4,3,2,1...count the weeks till  
Jesus comes.

Each week we add another  
light, our hope for Jesus  
growing bright.

We pray, we share, we do  
our part to welcome Jesus  
into our hearts.

Amen

future of children who are suffering today. It has become the custom of Pope Francis to release a video message detailing his prayer intention for each month.

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2019-12/pope-francis-prayer-intention-december-2019.html>

## **Advent Services**

The Coloma Carol Service is being held at Croydon Minster on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December at **6:30pm, doors open 6:15pm**. Please note this is a change to the previously published details. All are welcome.

## **The God Who Speaks – Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales**

***Scripture is at the centre of everything the Church does. The word of God shapes our prayer and worship. The Bible shows us how to understand the world, how we are called to live and relate to each other.***

2020 is the 10th anniversary of Verbum Domini – Pope Benedict XVI's Apostolic Exhortation on 'The Word of the Lord' and the 1,600 anniversary of St Jerome's death. These dates have inspired the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales to dedicate 2020 as a year of focus on the Bible and 'The God Who Speaks'.

During the year, the Church will be celebrating, living and sharing God's word with an exciting new Scripture initiative. It's an opportunity to enrich current practice and to develop and explore new ways of responding to 'The God who Speaks'.

Throughout 2020 there will be a range of events, activities and resources to participate in all around the country. To help achieve transformation in our hearts and in our communities there will be three themes of [celebrating](#), [living](#) and [sharing](#) God's word.

There is lots of information and ideas at this web address, including a course focusing on Advent. <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/the-god-who-speaks/>

## **Advent**

What does advent mean? Fr. Mike Schmitz explains.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SA-gx-PWB0A>

## **22nd December - Yule Sunday & Winter Solstice**

Yule is when the dark half of the year relinquishes to the light half. Starting the next morning at sunrise, the sun climbs just a little higher and stays a little longer in the sky each day. Known as Solstice Night, or the longest night of the year, the sun's "rebirth" was celebrated with much joy. On this night, our ancestors celebrated the rebirth of the Oak King, the Sun King, the Giver of Life that warmed the frozen Earth. From this day forward, the days would become longer.

Bonfires were lit in the fields, and crops and trees were "wassailed" with toasts of spiced cider. Children were escorted from house to house with gifts of clove spiked apples and oranges which were laid in baskets of evergreen boughs and wheat stalks dusted with flour. The apples and oranges represented the sun. The boughs were symbolic of immortality (evergreens were sacred to the Celts because they did not "die" thereby representing the eternal aspect of the Divine). The

wheat stalks portrayed the harvest, and the flour was accomplishment of triumph, light, and life. Holly and ivy not only decorated the outside, but also the inside of homes, in hopes Nature Sprites would come and join the celebration. A sprig of Holly was kept near the door all year long as a constant invitation for good fortune to visit the residents. Mistletoe was also hung as decoration. It represented the seed of the Divine, and at Midwinter, the Druids would travel deep into the forest to harvest it.



The ceremonial Yule log was the highlight of the Solstice festival. In accordance with tradition, the log must either have been harvested from the householder's land or given as a gift... it must never have been bought. Once dragged into the house and placed in the fireplace it was decorated in seasonal greenery, doused with cider or ale, and dusted with flour before set ablaze by a piece of last year's log, (held onto for just this purpose). The log would burn throughout the night, then smoulder for 12 days after before being ceremonially put out. Ash is the traditional wood of the Yule log. It is the sacred world tree of the Teutons, known as Yggdrasil. An herb of the Sun, Ash brings light into the hearth at the Solstice. Many customs created around Yule are identified with Christmas today. If you decorate your home with a Yule tree, holly or candles, you are following some of these old traditions. The Yule log is burned in the fire to symbolize the New-born Sun/Son.

### 23rd December – Hanukkah (also spelled Chanukah)



Chanukah is the Jewish eight-day, wintertime "festival of lights," celebrated with a nightly menorah lighting, special prayers and fried foods. The Hebrew word Chanukah means "dedication," and is thus named because it celebrates the rededication of the Holy Temple.

In the second century BCE, the Holy Land was ruled by the Seleucids (Syrian-Greeks), who tried to force the people of Israel to accept Greek culture and beliefs instead of mitzvah observance and belief in G-d. Against all odds, a small band of faithful but poorly armed Jews, led by Judah the Maccabee, defeated one of the mightiest armies on earth, drove the Greeks from the land, reclaimed the Holy Temple in Jerusalem and rededicated it to the service of G-d.

When they sought to light the Temple's Menorah (the seven-branched candelabrum), they found only a single cruse of olive oil that had escaped contamination by the Greeks. Miraculously, they lit the menorah and the one-day supply of oil lasted for eight days, until new oil could be prepared under conditions of ritual purity. To commemorate and publicize these miracles, the sages instituted the festival of Chanukah.

### How Chanukah Is Observed

At the heart of the festival is the nightly menorah lighting. The menorah holds nine flames, one of which is the *shamash* ("attendant"), which is used to kindle the other eight lights. On the first night, we light just one flame. On the second night, an additional flame is lit. By the eighth night of Chanukah, all eight lights are kindled. Special blessings are recited, often to a traditional melody, before the menorah is lit, and traditional songs are sung afterward.



A menorah is lit in every household (or even by each individual within the household) and placed in a doorway or window. The menorah is also lit in synagogues and other public places. In recent years, thousands of jumbo menorahs have cropped up in front of city halls and legislative buildings, and in malls and parks all over the world.

### 12 Days of Christmas

The song, "The Twelve Days of Christmas" is an English Christmas carol. From 1558 until 1829, Roman Catholics in England were not permitted to practice their faith openly. Someone during that era wrote this carol as a catechism song for young Catholics. It has two levels of meaning: the surface meaning plus a hidden meaning known only to members of the Church. Each element in the carol has a code word for a religious reality which the children could remember. To fit the number scheme, when you reach number 9, representing the Fruits of the Holy Spirit, the originator combined 6 to make 3, taking the 6 fruits that were similar: the fruit in each parenthesis is the that was not named separately. There are twelve Fruits of the Holy Spirit.

The "True Love" one hears in the song is not a smitten boy or girlfriend but Jesus Christ, because truly, Love was born on Christmas Day. The partridge in the pear tree also represents Him because this bird is willing to sacrifice its life, if necessary, to protect its young by feigning injury to draw away predators.

# 12 The Hidden Meaning of the Days of Christmas

December **25** 

**A Partridge in a Pear Tree**  
The One true God revealed  
in the person of Jesus Christ

December **26** 

**Two Turtledoves**  
The Old and  
New Testaments

December **27** 

**Three French hens**  
Faith, Hope and Love

December **28** 

**The Four Calling Birds**  
Four Gospels

December **29** 

**The Five Gold Rings**  
Recall the Torah (Law) the First  
Five Books of the Old Testament

December **30** 

**Six Geese A-Laying**  
Six Days of Creation

December **31** 

**Seven Swans A-Swimming**  
Sevenfold Gifts of the Spirit

January **1** 

**Eight Maids A-Milking**  
Eight Beatitudes

January **2** 

**Nine Ladies Dancing**  
Nine Fruits of the Spirit  
(See Galatians 5)

January **3** 

**Ten Lords A-Leaping**  
Ten Commandments

January **4** 

**Eleven Pipers Piping**  
Eleven Faithful Disciples

January **5** 

**Twelve Drummers Drumming**  
12 Points of Belief in the  
Apostles Creed

## Saints of the Week

From the Third Sunday in Advent through to the Nativity of the Lord on 25<sup>th</sup> December there are no specific commemorations of any saints. Our focus is building towards the birth of the Christ Child and Second Coming of Jesus.

*Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign:  
The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son,  
And will call him Emmanuel.  
— Isaiah 7:14*

*The star of Bethlehem shone  
when Christ was born  
In the darkest nights,  
Christ's love still shines the brightest*



**Have a Blessed and Joyous  
Christmas**