



## Remembering Vocations in Your 2020 Advent Devotions. . .

Advent is the start of our liturgical year. It is the season of preparation for our celebration of the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Advent is also the season to pray for the faithful to be called to follow in the life of Christ as shepherds of his flock just as He was born to lead us to salvation.

As we sacrifice and prepare ourselves for Christmas, we ask that the Holy Spirit will apply our devotions to the birth of new vocations to the religious life.

“...I ask the Church to continue to promote vocations. May she touch the hearts of the faithful and enable each of them to discover with gratitude God’s call in their lives, to find courage to say “yes” to God, to overcome all weariness through faith in Christ, and to make of their lives a song of praise for God, for their brothers and sisters, and for the whole world. May the Virgin Mary accompany us and intercede for us.” *Francis I*

### The Advent Wreath

The advent wreath is a circle representing the promise of eternal life to those who follow Jesus. It is made of evergreens to symbolize that God always loves us. There are four candles—one for each week of advent; they symbolize Christ as the “Light of the World.” The candles for the first, second and fourth Sundays are purple to signify penance. The candle for the third Sunday is rose colored as a reminder that the joy of Christmas is almost at hand.

The following devotions focus on each week of advent and the need for vocations to be “born” into the Church so that Christ’s life can continue through his followers.

### Prayer at the start of each Devotion

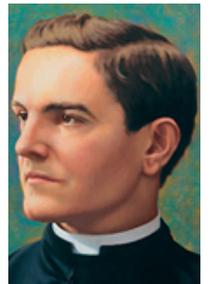
Thank you, Lord, for all the many great and wonderful gifts you give to our family. Help us to live each day with joy and humility. Keep us totally dedicated to serving you. Teach us to recognize the many ways you make your Spirit known. Then help each of us to accept your gift – the grace to answer your call to form, strengthen and expand the Body of Christ. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.



**November 29, First Sunday of Advent** [One purple candle]  
**December 3, Feast of St. Francis Xavier**

### Meditation

“In the Church's tradition, St Paul has always been recognized as father and teacher of those, called by the Lord, who have chosen unconditional dedication to him and to his Gospel. . . . One can say that he repeats to all consecrated men and women a forthright and affectionate invitation: "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (1 Cor 11: 1). What in fact is consecrated life other than a radical imitation of Jesus . . . ?” *Benedict XVI*



**Bl. Michael McGivney**  
Priest  
Founder, Knights  
of Columbus



**December 6, Second Sunday in Advent** [Two purple Candles]  
**December 6, Feast of St. Nicholas**  
**December 8, Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary**  
**December 12, Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe**

### Meditation

“Who can consider himself worthy to approach the priestly ministry? Who can embrace the consecrated life relying only on his or her own human powers?” “An emblematic human response, full of trust in God’s initiative, is the generous and unmitigated “Amen” of the Virgin of Nazareth, uttered with humble and decisive adherence to the plan of the Most High announced to her by God’s messenger (cf. *Lk 1:38*). Her prompt “Yes” allowed Her to become the Mother of God, the Mother of our Saviour.” *Benedict XVI*



**Bl. Rani Maria Vattali**  
Sister FCC, Martyr  
1954-1995



**December 13, Third Sunday of Advent** [Two purple candles and the rose candle]

### Meditation

“Enter into the Silence. Silence is key to sanity and wholeness. We can only “hear” the voice of God if we are quiet. Take out the ear buds of your iPhone, iPod, and iTunes and listen to God, the great I AM.”<sup>1</sup> “In responding to God’s call, young people see their own ecclesial horizon expand; they are able to consider various charisms and to undertake a more objective discernment. In this way, the community becomes the home and the family where vocations are born.” *Francis I*



**Bl. Carlo Acutis**  
1991—2006  
Patron of Youth  
and Computer  
Programmers



**December 20, Fourth Sunday of Advent** [All four candles]

### Meditation

“Dear friends, do not become discouraged in the face of difficulties and doubts; trust in God and follow Jesus faithfully and you will be witnesses of the joy that flows from intimate union with him. Imitating the Virgin Mary whom all generations proclaim as blessed because she believed, commit yourselves with every spiritual energy, to realize the heavenly Father’s plan of salvation, cultivating in your heart, like her, the ability to be astonished and to adore him who is mighty and does “great things”, for Holy is his name.” *Benedict XVI*



**Bl. Stanley Rother**  
1935—1981  
Priest, Martyr

### Prayer for Vocations<sup>2</sup>

Heavenly Father, Lord of the harvest, call forth vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life from our diocese and our families.

Inspire men to imitate Christ the Eternal High Priest in sacrificial service to Your Church.

Move the hearts of men and women to offer themselves wholly to You in poverty, chastity, and obedience.

Send them as laborers for Your harvest. Inspire the faithful to support them with prayer and sacrifice.

Raise up holy families who foster openness to Your call. We ask this through Christ, Our Lord.



**For information on vocations, Call Father Michael Isenberg (703) 841-2514, write:**  
[michael.isenberg@arlingtondiocese.org](mailto:michael.isenberg@arlingtondiocese.org)

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<sup>1</sup> USCCB, Vocations, <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/vocations/parents/top-ten-things-to-promote-vocations.cfm>

<sup>2</sup> Arlington Diocese Prayer for Vocations

Note:

Artwork: <https://carloacutis-en.org>; [http://newsaints.faithweb.com/new\\_saints.htm](http://newsaints.faithweb.com/new_saints.htm)

**PIERRE, Jean-Baptiste-Marie, Nativity**, Oil on canvas, Private collection, <http://www.wga.hu/>