



## COUNTDOWN TO CHRISTMAS CHALLENGE

As we begin the Advent season take a moment for yourself, spending time with Christ in the Gospel of Luke. Consider it a countdown to Christmas challenge!

Luke's Gospel has 24 Chapters, fittingly if we begin our journey walking with St. Luke on Dec. 1, reading one chapter a day, we will complete the Gospel on Christmas Eve. This countdown to Christmas with St. Luke's Gospel has popped up on Christian blog and social media posts the last couple years.

Before we begin this challenge, let's get to know St. Luke.

Saint Luke was not one of the original 12 Apostles. However, he is considered one of the most dedicated followers after Christ's ascension. He left his profession as a physician to become an evangelist with the other Apostles, after Saint Paul's preaching inspired him.

He was intelligent and loved being emersed in the life of Christ. His writings make it obvious that he not only enjoyed talking to countless people who knew Jesus and witnessed His miracles, but also that he was in search of the facts - the truth. Saint Luke is referred to as one of the Church's first historians.

He wrote the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles, which make up nearly a fourth of the New Testament. Saint Luke is a beautiful writer taking the reader through his messages and stories with such description the reader can envision and imagine themselves within them.

We can read St. Luke's words as if he were speaking personally to us. In fact, the Gospel of Luke (as well



as the Acts of the Apostles) were letters written to his friend and Roman dignitary Theophilus, who must have asked the Apostle to detail the facts of the life of Christ.

Even though the world was male-dominated, St. Luke preached and wrote about how Jesus went out of his way to bring God's love to women, the poor, and

all who were among the most forgotten and cast-out members of society.

It is believed that the story of our Savior's birth that St. Luke presents, was based on his personal conversations with Our Blessed Mother Mary.

His first lines in Chapter 1 of his gospel notes that he wrote it "after investigating everything carefully from the very first, to write and orderly account for you... so that you may know the truth..." (Luke 1:3-4).

Throughout his writings he relates the teachings of Jesus with the early church as told in Old Testament. Writing as one who presents facts to convince others that we should all know and love Jesus - our God - St. Luke illustrates Christ's mercy, healing, and compassion.

Saint Luke urges us to be Christian disciples and model ourselves after Jesus, and for us to seek salvation and peace through prayer. He even used Jesus as the example in Luke 23:34, when Jesus asked forgiveness of his crucifiers.

So, let's take the countdown to Christmas challenge this Advent to do something for ourselves! Let us all be inspired by St. Luke, seeking to know as much as we can about the life of Christ and want to share that good news with others through our actions and words.

# A FEW OF OUR FAVORITE FINDS

## GIFTS TO KEEP CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS

As advent begins the excitement and joy of Christmas grows. As a way to keep Christ in Christmas we have put together a list for you of our favorite finds to include in your gift giving, decorating, and go to vendors, when you need something a little extra special.

One of our favorites is from Charleston! Aisling Whelan is the owner of the Etsy shop, The Good Portion Company ([WWW.ETSY.COM/SHOP/THEGOODPORTIONCO](http://WWW.ETSY.COM/SHOP/THEGOODPORTIONCO)). She and her family are members of the Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart.



The Good Portion Co. began, “When I was transitioning out of the workforce into being a stay-at-home mom when our first daughter was born, in 2017,” she said. “I knew it was going to be important for me to have meaningful, fulfilling work to do that would engage my mind and creativity, and could also help support our family as we grow. It was my mom, beautifully, who reminded me how I used to make greeting cards for our family’s needs when I was in high school, and that

I have a gift for heartfelt words.”

The Good Portion Company specializes in stationary, wall art, and Catholic cards.

Trending now on many social media feeds is Shining Light Dolls ([SHININGLIGHTDOLLS.COM](http://SHININGLIGHTDOLLS.COM)).

Chantal Baros, owner, artist, and creator behind Shining Light Dolls, said her company is, “Passionate about making it fun, easy, and accessible for families to pass their Catholic faith onto their children.”



Shining Light Dolls®

The company specializes in dolls, games, puzzles, stickers, and more to plant the seed about Faith and God’s love for all of us.

“I started the company ten years ago, when I really saw a need in the market for affordable Catholic toys for children while shopping for my nephews- it was a whole different market back then,” she said. Baros lives in Chicago with her husband Kirk and their three children.



House of Joppa

Looking for statues, rosaries, jewelry, and Catholic decor? Check out House of Joppa at [WWW.HOUSEOFJOPPA.COM](http://WWW.HOUSEOFJOPPA.COM).

Created by Catholics Matt and Tabitha Kidman of Southeastern Michigan, House of Joppa began as an online boutique of shop Catholic art and items with a modern look and appeal to fit into homes today.

To find a gift for all ages make sure you visit the Petite Fleur Catholic Co. ([PETITFLEURCATHOLIC.CO](http://PETITFLEURCATHOLIC.CO)). The shop’s founder, created the shop to further her vocation as a wife and mother, use her creative talents, and strengthen her Catholic faith. The shop has everything from sweet saints and guardian angel blankets to trendy apparel and stickers to digital wall art.



Throughout the year in your FaithInWV e-bulletin and online on our diocesan social media we include images to enhance our feature stories and posts about saints, holy days, and faithful insights. These images are often from artisans whose work is available to purchase online. When we are able we share those links with you as part of the story. Consider making their portraits part of your home and Christmas gifts. They include:

- The Living Heart Co., from Grand Rapids, Mi.: [WWW.ETSY.COM/SHOP/THELIVINGHEARTCO](http://WWW.ETSY.COM/SHOP/THELIVINGHEARTCO)
- Evona Gallery by Ivona Staszewski, of McKinney, Texas: [WWW.ETSY.COM/SHOP/EVONAGALLERY](http://WWW.ETSY.COM/SHOP/EVONAGALLERY)
- Nichole Lanthier Art, of Lake Charles, Louisiana: [WWW.ETSY.COM/SHOP/NICHOLELANTHIER](http://WWW.ETSY.COM/SHOP/NICHOLELANTHIER)
- Amber Knorr Art by Amber Knorr of Steubenville, Ohio: [WWW.ETSY.COM/SHOP/AMBERKNORRART](http://WWW.ETSY.COM/SHOP/AMBERKNORRART)
- The Little Rose Shop by Raquel Rose, of Johnstown, Colorado: [WWW.ETSY.COM/SHOP/THELITTLEROSESHOP](http://WWW.ETSY.COM/SHOP/THELITTLEROSESHOP)
- Happy Saint Art by Anna Morelli of Missouri: [WWW.HAPPYSAINART.COM](http://WWW.HAPPYSAINART.COM)
- Jen Norton Art Studio at: [WWW.ETSY.COM/SHOP/JENNORTONARTSTUDIO](http://WWW.ETSY.COM/SHOP/JENNORTONARTSTUDIO)

We hope this list of resources helps you and your family celebrate Christ more fully this Christmas.

# ST. FRANCIS XAVIER

## AN EXAMPLE OF HOPE, FAITH, AND JOY

The Feast Day of St. Francis Xavier is a time to recognize this great missionary and also consider our own works of evangelization and care for others at the beginning of Advent. He chose to mirror the good he saw in his parents and those who put God first.



In a quick summary of his life, St. Francis Xavier seemed pretty dynamic, happy, and confident; but he had his own struggles with depression and loneliness. His father died when he was just a young boy; in his teens

he left home to study in Paris; while there his mother and sister died; and his other siblings were all married with families of their own. However, he chose to turn those negative energies into a challenge to be courageous with God as his navigator. He considered his faith as the greatest gift from his reverent parents. He chose to be a fisher of men and share his love of Christ.

He earned degrees in philosophy and theology. While

studying at the University of Paris, he met St. Ignatius Loyola. They became close friends. In 1534, together with five other men they founded the Society of Jesus (the Jesuit order). In 1537, St. Francis Xavier was ordained a priest.

An unnamed fellow Jesuit said, “I have never met anyone more filled with faith and hope, more open-minded than Francis. He never seems to lose his great joy and enthusiasm. He talks to both the good and the bad. Anything he is asked to do, Francis does willingly, simply because he loves everyone.”

He chose that attitude. Despite what had to have been dangerous and often miserable travel and living conditions, he focused on God to keep him balanced and grateful. Not every stop or plan was successful for him, but he remained determined.

He believed that we can face any challenge and danger as long as we love God. In his words: “In this life, we find our greatest comfort living in the midst of danger, that is, if we confront them solely for the love of God.”

On his feast day, let us pray we are enthusiastic, adventurous, and passionate about evangelizing as he was. Do not be afraid to share the love of Christ in your words and actions, mirroring those who nurtured that love in you.

*Editor's note: The portrait in this post is by Tianna Williams from Sacred Art by Tianna.*

## ST. ANDREW PRAYER IN PREPARATION OF CHRISTMAS

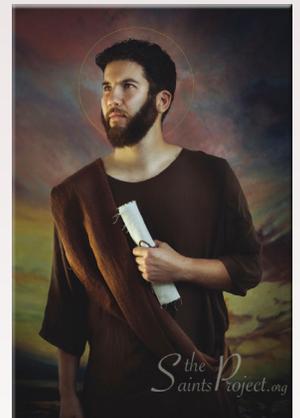
As we honor the Feast of St. Andrew on Nov. 30th we share this Advent Prayer that is to be recited 15 times a day until Christmas. This meditative prayer in its repetition helps increase our focus on the true meaning of Christmas – the gift of the Christ Child.

It is referred to as the St. Andrew Advent Prayer or St. Andrew Christmas Novena, not because we are praying to St. Andrew to intercede, but because it begins on the feast day of St. Andrew, the first apostle, and ends on Christmas day.

However, it wouldn't hurt to consider St. Andrew and call upon him to pray this anticipatory prayer with us. St. Andrew was after all the older brother Simon Peter – the Rock of the Church and the first pope. Certainly, St. Peter looked up to his brother for guidance, so we can too.

*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 the piercing cold. In that hour vouchsafe, I beseech Thee, O my God, to hear my prayer and grant my desires (recite your request here) through the merits of Our Savior Jesus Christ and of His Blessed Mother. Amen*

*Editor's note: The art of St. Andrew is a photo by Kristyn Brown and part of her The Saints Project collection.*



# FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

## First Reading: Isaiah 2:1-5

Walk in the light of the Lord and there will be no war for all will be united in the Heavenly Kingdom.

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## Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 122

“Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord.”

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## Second Reading: Romans 13:11-14

St. Paul teaches us that the morning will come revealing the light of God’s salvation. Prepare for the day resisting all temptations of darkness, keeping a heavenly focus.

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## Gospel: Matthew 24:37-44

Likewise in the other readings and Psalm for today, we hear from Matthew the story of Jesus teaching the faithful to be prepared, alert, and purposefully do right by God for we do not know when the end will come.

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[CLICK HERE FOR FULL SCRIPTURE TEXT  
BIBLE.USCCB.ORG/BIBLE/READINGS/112722.CFM](http://BIBLE.USCCB.ORG/BIBLE/READINGS/112722.CFM)

## PRAYER INTENTIONS

For the Church, that we seek to celebrate Christ’s true presence not only in the Eucharist, but in all of God’s creation as we await the coming of the Lord this Advent, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For the leaders of the world, heed the words of St. Paul – to live as good Christians helping others and doing what is right in Christ’s sight, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For all who struggle financially and spiritually, let the light of Christ guide them to peace and eternal joy, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For the special and habitual intentions of the faithful those spoken and those held dear in the silence of our hearts, let us pray to the Lord. . .

*Lord hear our prayer*

## Special Collection Dec. 10-11

### Retirement Fund for Religious



Please give to those who have given a lifetime.



# CELEBRATE GIVING TUESDAY

November 29, 2022

## WAYS TO CELEBRATE:

- Donate to the CSA
- Sign up for a new ministry
- Volunteer
- Go to Mass
- Pray the rosary



## BROUGHT TO YOU BY YOU

Berkeley Springs - Hancock, MD	FM	96.3
Berkeley Springs	FM	107.9
Clarksburg-Bridgeport	FM	97.5
Dunbar - Charleston	AM	1450
Eastern Panhandle	AM	740
Eastern Panhandle	FM	106.5
Grafton - Clarksburg	AM	1190
Montgomery - Beckley	FM	89.7
Purgitsville	FM	98.7
St. Marys - Parkersburg	FM	105.3
Star City -Morgantown	FM	89.7
Summersville	FM	91.3
Wheeling - Martins Ferry, OH	FM	90.7
Weirton - Steubenville	FM	97.7

~Also Streaming in WV at [www.rdo.to/WLOL](http://www.rdo.to/WLOL)~

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## Liturgy of the Hours

Pray the prayer for this day, this hour!

[EBREVIARY.COM](http://EBREVIARY.COM) LITURGY OF THE HOURS

Scan the QR code or visit the link below to view a PDF version of the Liturgy of the Hours.



## MASS ONLINE

Saturday 6pm Masses will continue to be livestreamed from the Cathedral of St. Joseph, and will be available on our website each Sunday at [DWC.ORG](http://DWC.ORG).