



**This Advent we invite you to journey with Pope Francis and his *Rejoice and Be Glad: On the Call to Holiness in Today's World***

“The Beatitudes are like a Christian’s identity card. So if anyone asks: “What must one do to be a good Christian?”, the answer is clear. We have to do, each in our own way, what Jesus told us in the Sermon on the Mount.” (*Rejoice and Be Glad*, #63)



**2 First Sunday of Advent**/International Day for the Abolition of Slavery: Work against slavery by buying Fair Trade Christmas Gifts <https://www.tenthousandvillages.com/>

3 Feast of St. Francis Xavier, patron of missions. Mother Teresa says we must each find our own Calcutta. Where is a situation of need nearby that calls to you?

4 Carve out some quiet time in Advent to read Pope Francis’s apostolic exhortation *Rejoice and Be Glad: On the Call to Holiness in the Modern World*. Online at:

[www.americamagazine.org/sites/default/files/attachments/Gaudete%20et%20Exsultate.pdf](http://www.americamagazine.org/sites/default/files/attachments/Gaudete%20et%20Exsultate.pdf)

5 Mahatma Gandhi read the entire sermon on the Mount twice a day. Resolve to read the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:2-12 or Luke 6:20-26) daily during Advent.

6 Feast of St. Nicholas – Send a small gift in gratitude to a person or organization that works for peace.

7 Write and pray a litany of your favorite saints, canonized and uncanonized.

8 Immaculate Conception” Mary lived the Beatitudes of Jesus as none other. She teaches us the way of holiness and she walks ever at our side. She does not let us remain fallen and at times she takes us into her arms without judging us.” (*Rejoice and Be Glad*, #176). This is the traditional day for the Sisters of Charity to renew their vows. Renew your vows today to follow the baptismal call of holiness.

“Very often holiness found in our next-door neighbors, those who, living in our midst, reflect God’s presence.” (*Rejoice and Be Glad*, #7)



**9 Second Sunday of Advent** – Pray by name for the people in your neighborhood. Introduce yourself to a neighbor you don’t know.

10 Last Day of Hanukkah. Pray Psalm 133 for peace in the Middle East.

11 “If I encounter a person sleeping outdoors on a cold night, I can view him or her as an annoyance, an idler, an obstacle in my path, a troubling sight, a problem for politicians to sort out, or even a piece of refuse cluttering a public space. Or I can respond with faith and charity, and see in this person a human being with a dignity identical to my own.” (*Rejoice and Be Glad*, #98) What can I do for the homeless this winter?

12 Our Lady of Guadalupe Hail Mary, Mother of our World, Make us global citizens, working for justice and well-being for the whole Earth community.

13 Who is the holiest person you have known personally? How is their holiness a model for you?

14 Anniversary of the 2012 school shooting in Newtown, CT. Since Sandy Hook more than a 150,000 Americans been killed in gun violence. Meditate on those numbers. Contemplate their faces.

15 Chose some act of penance today for the ways in which Christians have promoted violence, injustice, and war.

**“Try to do so by listening to God in prayer and recognizing the signs that he gives you. Always ask the Spirit what Jesus expects from you at every moment of your life and in every decision you must make, so as to discern its place in the mission you have received. Allow the Spirit to forge in you the personal mystery that can reflect Jesus Christ in today’s world.” (Rejoice and Be Glad, #23)**



**16 Third Sunday of Advent** – Today the Church wears rose colored vestments, the color of the dawn. Where do you see the dawn of hope in a desperate situation?

17 (1936) Today is the birthday of Pope Francis. Pray for wisdom and guidance in his ministry.

18 Select a holy person who intrigues you but about whom you don’t know much. Read a book about them. Make them your patron for 2019.

19 “Jesus himself warns us that the path he proposes goes against the flow, even making us challenge society by the way we live and, as a result, becoming a nuisance.” (Rejoice and Be Glad, #90). How is God calling you to resistance, “going against the flow” as a way of holiness?

20 As you write Christmas cards, say a prayer of peace for each recipient.

21 Winter Solstice – Eat dinner by candlelight.

22 Pray for expectant parents and for all caregivers of children, that they will have the same reverence for children that Mary and Joseph did.

**“Are there moments when you place yourself quietly in the Lord’s presence, when you calmly spend time with him, when you bask in his gaze? Do you let his fire inflame your heart? Unless you let him warm you more and more with his love and tenderness, you will not catch fire. How will you then be able to set the hearts of others on fire by your words and witness?” (Rejoice and Be Glad, #151)**



**23 Fourth Sunday of Advent** Pope Francis writes in *Laudato Si*: ‘Living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience.’” Do I see conserving water, eliminating plastics, turning off unnecessary lights, eating less meat, as acts of holiness?

24 Hold in prayer a situation of war or other violence and pray as a mantra in rhythm with your breath the words of the angels of Bethlehem...Glory to God...peace on earth.

25 Spend some time praying before the manger. How does the vulnerability of God call you to holiness?