

## ADVENT PREPARATIONS

The ever beautiful Season of Advent is well on its way and will soon be here. As always, certain preparations must be made for the holy Feast of the Birth of our Lord. The strategic importance of the home must now be brought into full focus. The home must be a humble copy of the House of Nazareth. In the home, the father is the patriarch. In the absence of the father, the mother is the matriarch. In normal conditions the father and mother together must strive to raise Christian living in our day to its highest and noblest expression.

From the very beginning it must be kept in mind by everyone that the father of the family, being the patriarch, gets his authority from God Himself. The father of the family holds the place of Christ in the family, and is always first in the structure of the family. The mother's place is also most important in the structure, and her support of the authority of the father gives proper example to the children, thereby giving Christian expression to the life in the world of our day.

In the House of Nazareth, even though Mary was the mother of Jesus, Whom she knew to be God, she was subject to the authority of Joseph, her husband. The two working together in harmony governed the Child Jesus, Who "went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them." (St. Luke)

There are many, many wonderful Advent customs, too many to speak of. We advocate just a few of them, such as the Advent Wreath, the Blessed Wheat, and St. Nicholas. We now wish to introduce another wonderful family custom, perhaps new to some of us. This is the custom of Blessing Bread on the Fourth Sunday of Advent, which the father of the family, immediately before dinner that day, personally distributes to each member of his family.

A day or two before the Fourth Sunday of Advent, the mother herself bakes a loaf of bread, leaving it unsliced. After it has cooled, she, together with the children, wraps the loaf in attractive paper or cloth. A Christmassy look about the wrapping would be quite appropriate. On the Fourth Sunday of Advent (this year, December 18), the bread is brought to the Church and placed on the table provided for it. The Celebrant will then bless the bread after the 10:00 Mass.

The bread is then taken home. After all are seated at the dinner table, before beginning the meal, the mother presents the loaf of bread to the father, who, following the instructions which will be attached to next week's Bulletin, places his blessing upon it. He unwraps the unsliced loaf, and **breaking** off pieces of it, personally hands a piece to each member of his family, beginning with the mother, in love and respect and gratitude, and continuing with the children, from the eldest down to the youngest. After the bread has been distributed, the father stands, and with his right hand extended, blesses his family. Wherever the circumstances permit, it is most appropriate to have understanding friends or relatives over for the ceremony and dinner. The father, in his own home and at his own table, always sits at the head of the table.

If ever good Christian order is to be restored to Christian living, it has to begin in the family, and as intended by God Himself. Just as His plan was perfectly lived out and clearly understood in the House of Nazareth, so must His plan be lived out as perfectly as possible and clearly understood within the household of each of us. Let us never allow the distorted mentality of the world to deform family living in our own homes. The husband and the wife – the father and the mother – each working together and understanding the Will of the Supreme God, will thus give physical and spiritual growth to the children God has given them, and, they will raise Christian living in their household to its highest and noblest expression, in spite of the rampant evil and Godlessness of our day.



1. There will be Catechism class after the 10:00 AM Mass today.
2. There will be NO Benediction after Vespers today, due to the fact that we have double Vespers today: Second Vespers of Benedictine All Saints, followed immediately by First Vespers of Benedictine All Souls.
3. November is the Month of the Poor Souls in Purgatory. Remember them in your prayers and good works.
4. The very beautiful 2006 Calendars are now available at the usual price of \$6.00 each. At Christ the King Abbey in Cullman, see Father Francis, OSB. At Our Lady of Lourdes Chapel in Montgomery, see Mrs. Pam Olson. At Saint Pius V Chapel in Birmingham, see Father Sebastian, OSB.
5. Please pray for all the Sick and Shut-ins of our Chapels. LET US ALSO PRAY FOR EVERYONE. Let us pray for ALL the priests and religious men and women of the world. NO MAN, WOMAN, OR CHILD SHOULD BE LEFT OUT OF OUR PRAYER.

6. MASSES FOR THE WEEK: (Father Abbot Leonard's schedule only)

SUNDAY:	For the People of our Chapels
MONDAY:	For the Poor Souls in Purgatory
TUESDAY:	Deceased Margaret and Anton Satori
WEDNESDAY:	Deceased Zeke Saccarett
THURSDAY:	Deceased Cora Segura Cousin
FRIDAY:	Deceased Marguerite Roden
SATURDAY:	Deceased Arthur and Mark Moser