



December 2024  
The Immaculate Conception



December is upon us. And though we are likely still digesting our Thanksgiving feast we are already looking ahead to Christmas preparations. We haven't had the time to fully appreciate one feast before we are off to the next. The Church, in her Motherly Wisdom, knows we need time to slow down and just be, and she has given us that time-Advent.

The first day of advent marks the beginning of a new liturgical year and the first four weeks of this new year give us an opportunity to PREPARE our hearts, minds, souls, and bodies for the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. There are a multitude of ways to live out this season in your home, your domestic church. I implore you to delve into this solemn time if you have yet to experience it. Hold off on Christmas decorating for as long as possible; let the anticipation build! Pray the joyous mysteries and feel the warmth of your Mother's mantle envelop you as she leads you to her Son. Enjoy the glow of candles in your advent wreath at dinner as you wait for the Light of the world. Rock your babies to sleep to the angelic voices of Benedictines of Mary, Queen of Apostles (Advent at Ephesus). If a compromise needs to be made, put up the tree, but decorate it with Jesse Tree and O Antiphons ornaments. Celebrate the Saints of December, such as St. Nicholas, St. Lucy and The Immaculate Conception. Make it a priority to have a child friendly Nativity set for the children to play with. All of these, and more, can be done as a family with all ages. It just takes a little planning, creativity, love and patience. Don't fret about things looking perfect. By introducing your children to these activities and prayers, you are inviting them to know and love their Creator. And through this offering *you* will grow to know and love Him more! That is our purpose!! To know, love and serve God with all our heart, mind, soul and body in this life so we can be happy with Him in the next.

Below you'll find a few websites I found useful when my children were much younger. They are filled with ideas and free printables. I hope you will explore these sites and find new traditions for your family. Please email me, Sarah Millet ([sarahmillet@gmail.com](mailto:sarahmillet@gmail.com)), if you have any questions or just need a sounding board. Wait on the Lord. As you wait, prepare your heart to receive your King. Come December 25th you will no longer be able to contain your joy and you will find you are able to revel in that joy for TWELVE days!