



Days of Blessings: January 12 - The Baptism of Jesus, Our Lord

After the Lord was baptized, the heavens were opened, and the Spirit descended upon him like a dove, and the voice for the Father thundered: This is my beloved son, with whom I am pleased.” (Matthew 3:16-17)

At our baptism, we received the Spirit. Do we let the Spirit guide us?

Actions:

- In the morning, do we ask Jesus to guide us in our day.
- At bedtime, do we ponder how our day developed, and did we please God?

THANK YOU FOR CELEBRATING ALL THE DAYS OF THE CHRISTMAS SEASON!

Special thanks to Nancy Schaaf who composed all of these reflections and actions ! May God reward you!

**Celebrating All the
Christmas Season:
Family Booklet**



**Our Lady of Mount Carmel
St. Luke Church and
St. Luke School**

FAMILY

The word *family* is one of the most loosely defined terms in the English language because it means something different to everyone. For some, family might be the relatives they share a home with, while others may extend the definition to include distant relatives living far away. Still, others consider their closest friends or even their pets as family.

Though families vary greatly, they all share one core principle: love and commitment. Today, there are countless ways to define family, and each is equally valid and worth celebrating. Everyone has the right to define family according to their own standards. You may have several families throughout your life—or even at the same time—depending on what works for you. Whether traditional or unconventional, the essence of family lies in the connections that bring you love, support, and belonging. As the saying goes, "Family is what you make it." Whether made up of blood relatives, friends, pets, or a mix of these, your family can offer the foundation you need to thrive.

Catholics celebrate Christmas Time beginning with the Christmas Eve Mass and concluding with the Baptism of the Lord, which falls on January 12th this year. This season is a beautiful opportunity to grow closer to God, as it reminds us that Jesus came to be with us. By focusing on Jesus, we can better understand His immense love for us.

Simple Christmas activities shared with family, friends, and parish groups can deepen faith and help share the true meaning of Christmas with others. These activities aim to keep Christ at the center of the season. Each tradition can serve as a reminder that Jesus is God's greatest gift to humanity. Through these celebrations, you can spread the love and joy of Jesus to those around you.

Days of Blessings: December 24 Christmas Eve

"Do you understand what I have done for you?" He (Jesus) asked them. "You call Me Teacher and Lord, and rightly so, for that is what I AM. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.

Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them."

(John 13:12-17)

Today, serve others with a positive, loving attitude, knowing that when you serve others you are most like Jesus.

Days of Blessings: January 9

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted." (Matthew 5:4)

Today, reach out to someone who needs an extra dose of comfort during this Christmas season.

Actions

- Write a note or help your child make a card.
- Invite someone to lunch.
- Listen compassionately to someone today.
- Give someone who's in a tough season the gift of normalcy or laughter.

Days of Blessings: January 10

"The Israelites had done all the work just as the Lord had commanded Moses. Moses inspected the work and saw that they had done it just as the Lord had commanded. So, Moses blessed them." (Exodus 39:42-43)

Did you know that God cares about your work? In fact, blessing comes to those who do their work to the best of their ability and with integrity. Today, be intentional about doing your work in such a way that it is pleasing to God and blesses others. Actions:

- Go the extra mile, putting forth your best effort in a project you're working on today.
- Finish something you started.
- Start something you've been putting off.
- Keep a positive attitude as you go about your work today, mindful that the ability to work is a blessing from God.

Days of Blessings: January 11

"Joshua blessed them and sent them away, and they went to their homes... When Joshua sent them home, he blessed them." (Joshua 22:6-7)

Today, whenever someone leaves your home, office or school, send them out with a blessing.

Actions:

- Pray a blessing over your child as you drive to school.
- Say a silent prayer for every person you talk to today.
- If you're having people in your home this weekend, make it a point to say something encouraging to every person.
- Speak heartfelt words of encouragement.

Day of Blessings: January 6

“That the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” (Galatians 3:14)

God blesses us so we can bless others. Today, pray and ask for God’s blessing on your life. Pray for God’s blessing over your family members, naming each one individually.

Actions:

- Before a meal today, have family members pray for God to bless the person on their right.
- Before you drop your kids off at school, pray for God to bless every child in your car.
- Before bed, have kids pray for God to bless each family member.
- Pray God’s blessings over your family with your spouse.

Days of Blessings: January 7

“Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you.” (Luke 6:28)

Today, pray for someone who hurts you or your feelings.

Actions:

- Instead of venting, rehashing or gossiping about someone who hurt you, pray for them.
- Pray for a friend or loved one who’s been hurt.
- If praying for someone who hurt you is hard, ask God to help you to even want to pray for the person who has hurt you.
- Thank God that hurts can be healed.

Days of Blessings: January 8

“Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people he chose for his inheritance.” (Psalm 33:12)

Today, pray for your country. Thank God for the blessing of living where you live. Pray

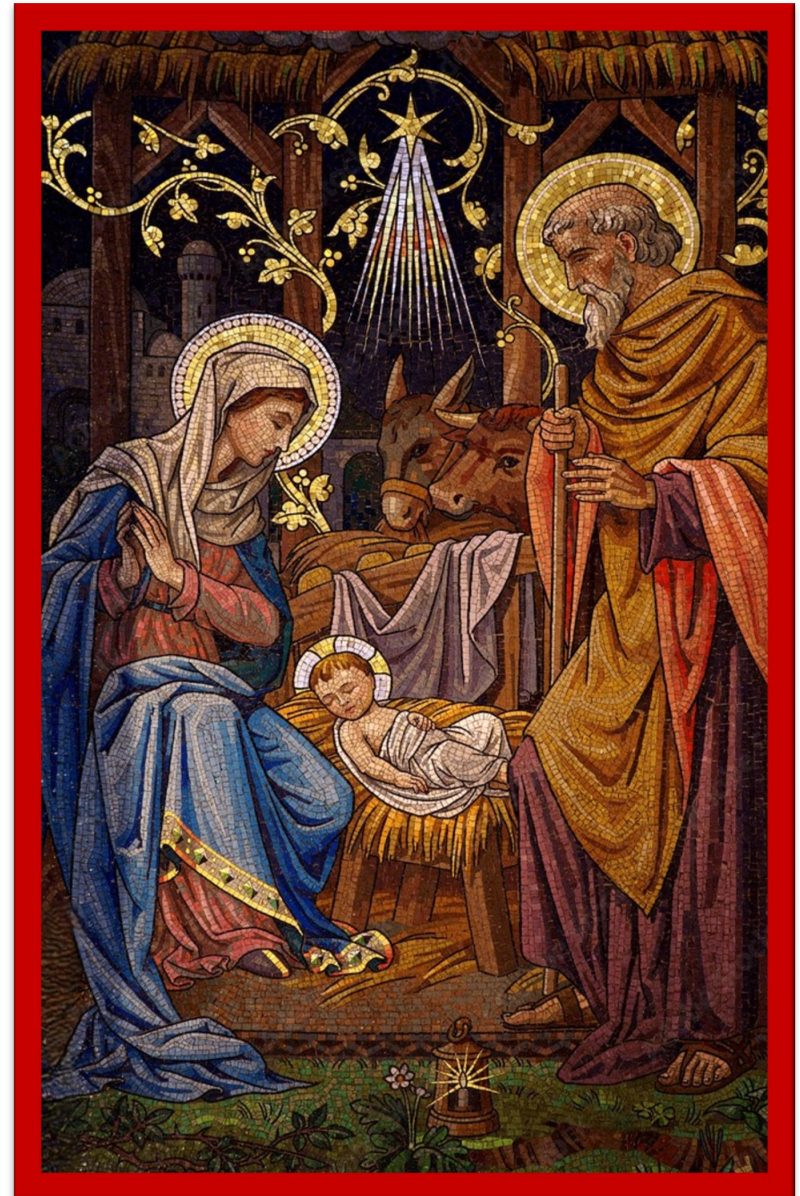
that all the chaos in our world would turn people’s hearts toward God.

Actions:

- Go around the dinner table and have each person share why they think it’s a blessing to live in our country.
- Pray for the men and women who serve in our military, especially those who are away during Christmastime.
- Pray for our nation’s leaders.
- Pray that people in our country would want to know and follow God.

Actions:

- As you work in the kitchen, help your kids get dressed for Christmas Eve service, or wrap those last few gifts, pray for the people you’re serving.
- Even if your day is full, treat others like you would want to be treated.
- If you need extra help today, ask your spouse, children or friends with a loving attitude.
- Offer to do a task no one else wants to do.



Days of Blessings: December 25 - Christmas Day

“Let us all rejoice in the Lord, for our Savior has been born in the world.” (Psalm 27)

Today is Christmas Day. God has a gift for you—a relationship with Him through His son, Jesus. Don’t reject the gift or neglect the gift. Accept the gift today.

Actions:

- Read the Christmas story found in Luke 2:1-20.
- Take a few private moments and consider how your life is different because Jesus was born.
- As you open your gifts today, remember the first and greatest Christmas gift ever given was the gift of Jesus.
- When your head hits the pillow tonight, say a silent prayer thanking God for blessing you with a multitude of blessings and ask that he uses you to be a blessing to others in the new year.

Days of Blessings: December 26 - St. Stephen

“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.” (Matthew 5:7)

St. Steven is recognized as the first Christian martyr. God granted Stephen a wondrous vision by letting him see a vision of “the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.” Stephen was stoned as a heretic, and he asked God to forgive those who were stoning him. Today, give someone the gift of grace and mercy.

Actions:

- Give mercy to the driver who cuts you off, or the salesclerk who is as slow as molasses.
- Show mercy to a friend or family member who is grumpy or unkind due to the stress of the holidays.
- Show mercy to a spouse or child who messes up today.
- Tell God “Thank you” for showing you mercy, even when you’re at your worst.

Days of Blessings: December 27 - St. John Apostle and Evangelist

“Blessed are those whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the Lord. Blessed are those who keep his statutes and seek him with all their heart.” (Psalm 119:1-2)

We are blessed that our faith in Jesus is founded on the testimony of witnesses like St. John. Today, seek to follow God in everything you do and say. How would the world look? Ask yourself throughout the day, “Is what I am doing, how I am speaking or what I am thinking, pleasing God?”

Actions:



Days of Blessings: January 5 - The Epiphany

“Arise, Jerusalem, and look to the East and see your children gathered from the rising to the setting of the sun.” (Baruch 5:5)

The Epiphany marks the arrival of visitors, traditionally identified as magi, to where Jesus was born. Their visit is a reminder that Jesus came to bring salvation to all nations.

Actions:

Consider doing a home blessing. Use holy water and mark your front door with chalk, writing the year and the initials “C+M+B,” which stand for “Christus Mansionem Benedicat” (“May Christ bless this house”). This tradition invites Christ’s blessing on your home for the new year.

Days of Blessings: January 1 - Solemnity of Mary

"Hail holy Mother, who gave birth to the King Who rules heaven and earth forever."

Attend Mass on this holy day of obligation in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who was the mother of Jesus and the mother to us all.

Actions:

- Add a Hail Mary to your daily prayer.
- Wear blue today in honor of Mary!
- Say the Rosary.

Days of Blessings: January 2

"Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him" (Psalm 34:8)

Today, experience God's goodness.

Actions:

- Taste that the Lord is good by making a yummy meal/dessert or eating one.
- See that the Lord is good by pausing long enough to notice the beauty of nature.
- If you feel overwhelmed by people, tasks or schedules, take a break from the rush. Pray to Jesus and he will grant you rest and peace.

Days of Blessings: January 3

"...we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" (Acts 20:35)

Today, be intentional about being a giver rather than a receiver.

Actions:

- Donate your time.
- Give a hug, a smile or the gift of a listening ear.
- Give the gift of serving someone in your family, at your work or in your neighborhood.

Days of Blessings: January 4

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." (Matthew 5:9)

Today, where there is conflict, we choose to bring peace.

Actions:

- Say "I'm sorry" the moment you realize you are in the wrong today.
- If you are caught in a potential conflict, think to yourself, "Tonight, when the day is over, how will I be glad I acted?" and choose to act rather than react.
- Infuse a negative conversation with something positive.

- Share a story with a friend or family member about a time someone's integrity inspired you to live with integrity also.
- Read Psalm 119, which is all about the benefits of following God's Word.

Days of Blessings: December 28 - The Holy Innocents

"The innocents were slaughtered as infants for Christ; spotless, they follow the lamb and sing forever: Glory to you, O Lord."

Jesus give me a generous heart open to helping a child in need. As horrifying as this gospel story is, the sad truth is that children have been victimized throughout history and are still being victimized today.

Actions:

- Volunteer to tutor a child.
- Give financial or emotional support to a pregnant woman who is in need.
- Donate to charitable organizations that assist children.
- Volunteer to teach religious studies in your parish.
- Pray to end abortion.





Days of Blessings: December 29 - The Holy Family

“The shepherds went in haste and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant lying in a manger.” (Luke 2:16)

“Beloved: See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God.”

Today, know that we all our God’s children and therefore family.

Actions:

In our home:

- Set the table, Clean up after dinner. Do chores joyfully.
- Help someone you love who is considered part of your family.

In our neighborhood:

- Shovel your neighbor’s sidewalk or walk the dog for an elderly neighbor.
- Be friendly to your neighbors and say a little prayer for them.

In our community:

- Ask a new friend to play with at recess.
- Sit with new friends at lunch. Make everyone feel welcome at the table.
- Smile at people and greet them. Then silently say a blessing for those you meet.

Days of Blessings: December 30

“It is a sin to despise one’s neighbor, but blessed is the one who is kind to the needy” (Proverbs 14:21)

Today, be kind to someone in need.

Actions:

- Donate to a food pantry or shelter or volunteer your time to help.
- Make a financial contribution to an organization that helps the needy.
- If you recognize a person needs help, offer your assistance joyfully.

Days of Blessings: December 31

“Surely you have granted him unending blessings and made him glad with the joy of your presence.” (Psalm 21:6)

Today, live with awareness that you are continually in God’s presence and are the recipient of unending blessings.

Actions:

- Start your day off by thanking God that He walks with you throughout your day today.
- Spend intentional time with God today by reading His Word, the Bible.
- Name as many blessings as you can think of.