

*Newsletter - Fall 2021*  
*The Sisters of St. Thomas Aquinas*



**J. Piercey Studios has completed a beautiful restoration of the stained glass. The windows are magnificent.**

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Dear Readers and Benefactors,

The academic year is in full vigor at Queen of All Saints Academy. The formation of the minds and characters of the students is complimented by the Advent season since Advent forms our hearts for the coming of the Messiah. We join with the Church in her Christmas hope which is also ours since each one of us has been an object of God's mercy, purchased by His blood. And so we enter the four weeks of Advent, symbolic of the four thousand years during which the saints of the Old Law awaited the coming of the Messiah.

Two tasks are assigned us during this season. “..it is our duty to join with the saints of the Old Law in asking for the Messias, and thus pay the debt which the whole human race owes to the divine mercy.” (Liturgical Year)

The second task is preparation for the coming of the Savior to our hearts. “You, who have had Him within you without knowing Him, and have possessed Him without relishing the sweetness of His presence, open your hearts to welcome Him, this time, with more care and love. He repeats His visit of this year with an untiring tenderness; He has forgotten your past slights; He would ‘that all things be new.’ [Apoc. xxi. 5]. Make room for the Divine Infant, for He desires to grow within your soul.” (Liturgical Year)

Through the prayer and sacrifice of Advent, the students prepare their hearts for this coming of the Divine Infant. This is no easy task today amidst the bustle of the commercial world, bent on pleasure. The Catholic family withdraws from this bustle and gathers around the Nativity scene to warm their hearts with the love of God. Several Catholic traditions are recommended to facilitate this. We encourage our families to incorporate these practices during the Advent season as a means of keeping our minds and hearts fixed on the hope of the manger.



This November, the Sisters welcomed new postulants to the motherhouse. The postulants will be instructed on the rules and spirit of the Congregation over the next few months. If they persevere in their vocation, they will receive the habit after this period of probation and enter the novitiate.

# Five Advent Practices

## Erecting a Nativity Scene in the Home



St. Bonaventure tells us that, at the permission of the Supreme Pontiff, St. Francis of Assisi set up a manger with hay and two live animals—an ox and an ass—in a cave in the Italian village of Greccio. Solemn Masses were celebrated over the manger, and St. Francis preached to the faithful the birth of the King in poverty. A little Child then appeared, sleeping in the manger, “who seemed to be awakened from sleep when blessed Father Francis embraced him in both arms.” Thus the Catholic tradition of the nativity scene was born. The creche is customarily setup for the first Sunday of Advent, though the Christ Child does not grace the scene until Christmas Day.



## Lighting the Advent Wreath

The four candles of the Advent wreath represent the four Sundays of Advent. Each week, one additional candle is lit as we approach the great feast. The school children assemble in the chapel before dismissal to sing "Veni, Veni Emmanuel" after lighting the wreath. A family custom is to light the wreath every evening during the rosary or Christmas novena.

## Resolutions & the Giving Manger

The students are encouraged to make sacrifices during the Advent season. An excellent way of incorporating the resolutions as a family practice is to have each family member place a straw in a manger or stable for every day the Advent resolution is kept. This can be done each evening after the family rosary.

## The Liturgical Year

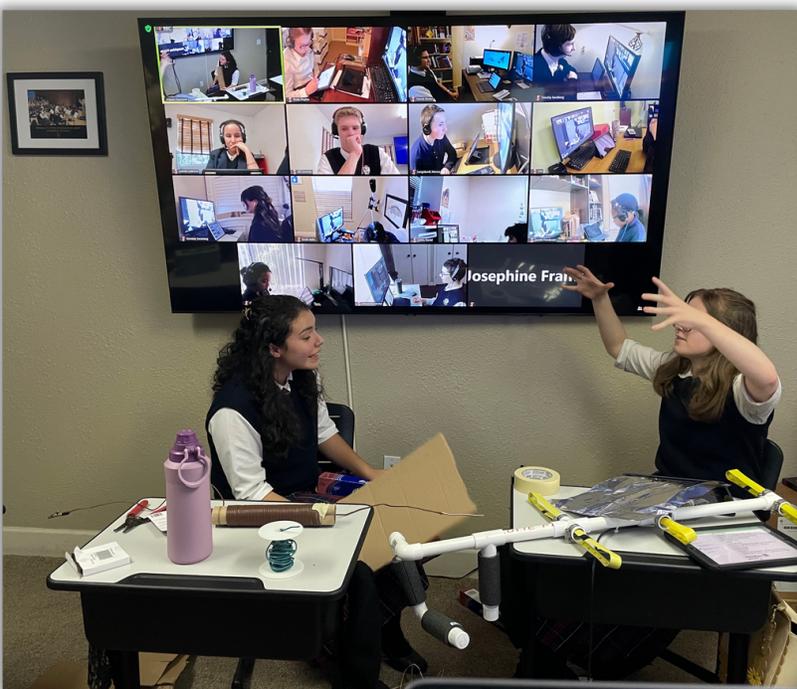
This excellent book contains history, spiritual reading, and prayers for the Advent season. By reading each day's commentary, we keep in mind the sentiments of Holy Mother Church. The Liturgical Year used by traditional Catholics is that written by Dom Prosper Gueranger. Although the books themselves are expensive, the full text can be found organized by month [at this website](#) since the book is in the public domain. PDF's are also available to print.

## Christmas Music: December 25 Onward

It is recommended that we abstain from listening to Christmas music during the season of Advent. Contrary to the calendar of the modern world, Catholics celebrate Christmas from December 25 to February 2, while Advent is spent in preparation and mortification. The modern custom to begin the celebration the day after Thanksgiving, decorating the tree and playing Christmas music, inhibits the spirit of Advent. Although Advent is a joyful preparation, we find it impossible to empty our hearts for the Christ Child if we are filling them with pleasure.

# Queen of All Saints Academy

Happy All Saints' Day! The parish enjoyed this year's All Saints' festival which included a costume contest for the younger children, pumpkin carving, cornhole... Thank you to everyone for your help with this festival!



The high school science class's attempt to build a radio included some creative antennas using PVC and measuring tapes.

Once a month, while the boys are at their soccer game, the campus girls enjoy an evening of fun at the school, including games, a campfire, or a movie.





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