



Advent is the anticipation of the coming of the Lord!

By Marge Loenser

Advent is the anticipation of the coming of the Lord--the Christ, the King! Rejoice, Rejoice, again I say rejoice (Philippians 4:4). He is coming--coming as an innocent baby. A poor baby born in a cave and lying in a manger. Oh, holy night! The angels rejoiced and told the shepherds to come to Bethlehem and behold a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, laid in a manger. "Glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace to men of good will ". (Luke 2:14) The night sky was filled with glory!

December of course is most notable for the birth of our Lord, but we celebrate many saints this month. For instance, on the 6th, St. Nicholas (the original "Santa"). He was born to wealthy parents, but lost them at a young age. His parents had raised him to be a devout Christian, so after their death, he sold what he had and gave it to the poor. He was well known for his works of charity and was called Nicholas the wonderworker!

On the twelfth we celebrate Our Lady of Guadalupe. In 1531 our Lady appeared to Juan Diego three times and requested he tell the bishop to build a church there on Tepeyac hill. To finally convince the bishop, our Lady had Juan gather roses in his cloak, or tilma, and when the roses tumbled out of the tilma, a beautiful picture of our lady, dressed as a young native appeared, etched on the tilma. The picture remains on display in Mexico City to this day.

On the 26th we celebrate St. Stephen, our very first Christian martyr. He was a deacon of the early church and angered members of various synagogues by his teachings. He was stoned to death. St. Stephen please pray for us--pray we have the courage to stand up for Christian values.

On the 27th we celebrate St. John, beloved apostle and evangelist. He wrote the fourth gospel and the Book of Revelation. He was the young apostle who rested his head on Christ's breast during the last supper. St. John, whose gospel was all about love, please pray for us.

The feast of the Holy Innocents falls on the 28th. They were the babies ordered to be killed by Herod in Bethlehem in an attempt to kill baby Jesus, who was taken away in time by St. Joseph and Our blessed Mother to seek safety in Egypt. Holy Innocents please pray for the end of abortions.



I leave you with this simple Christmas poem. Love and Merry Christmas,

**'Twas the evening of Christmas and all through the night
Dwelt this sweet gentle silence and the brightness of light!
Shepherds were startled by angels on high,
And were told of a Babe born in Bethlehem nigh.
Hosanna! Come see the Messiah promised from old,
All wrapped up in cloth to keep out the cold.
See Mary and Joseph who dwelt at His side,
While shepherds looked on with their eyes opened wide!
We adore You; we adore You, sweet Baby King,
For to our hearts peace and salvation You Bring!'**



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