

The Immaculate Conception of the BVM – Monday 8th December 2025:

In our limited conception of things *'eternal'*, we think in very linear terms: Creation, humanity's fall from grace, then the prophets and later, in time, Mary and Jesus. However, we discover that the remedy for *'Original Sin'* had already been worked out in advance. As God holds all things in a single unified thought, Mary is conceived in His mind before our Creation and fall grace. It was God's *'concept'* for humanity that we *'know him, love him, serve him, and are happy with him in this world and the next'*. And yet, we are tempted to seek happiness in worldly things that fail, rather than on heavenly things which endure. Mary is an essential part of the remedy to our fall from grace. God does not think, *'what's the best fit here, what can I use as an instrument to put humanity back on track?'* No, Mary is the *'concept'*, the first and best choice for the Incarnation. From her, the Word is made flesh, for Mary is in God's mind from eternity. In God's *'prescience'* (foreknowledge), he knows humanity will reject his divine blessing. Rather than abandon us, God has the remedy to bring His original plan back on course. As this *'concept'* exists before the fall, it is also sinless, and Mary is preserved from original sin, the consequence of the fall. Only an *'Immaculate'* vessel is suitable for the Word to be made flesh. Again, through his foreknowledge of the History of our Salvation, God applies preveniently (*in advance*) the merits of her yes to being the mother of God and His son's yes to accepting death, even on a cross.

Tuesday in 2nd Week of Advent – 9th December 2025:

Like the exiles of Isaiah's time, we hope to return home to the Father's House, not in Jerusalem but in heaven. In Christ's Advent, our deliverance is announced: the Lord's presence, power, and glory wipes away humanity's shame, setting us back on pilgrimage to the homeland promised to God's people. The gospel tells us we will be freed from the ills of sin and death, and the Mass is our song of joy for our redemption.

Optional Memorial of Our Lady of Loreto – 10th December 2025:

The *Litany of Loreto* petitions Our Lady as our Queen and Mother. For she is Mother of God, Mother of the Church, Mother of Mercy, Mother of Divine Grace, Mother of Hope, Mother most pure, Mother most chaste, Mother inviolate, Mother undefiled, Mother most amiable, Mother of good counsel. She is Queen of Angels, Queen of Patriarchs, Queen of Prophets, Queen of Apostles, Queen of Martyrs, Queen of Confessors, Queen of Virgins. She is mother and queen of us all, may she pray for us.

Thursday in 2nd Week of Advent – 11th December 2025:

Our announcement of the gospel is simple yet profound: *'fear not, trust in the Lord even if the situation seems hopeless. God will give them the strength and grace to push through to the other side'*. The prophet Isaiah expresses God's special love for his people – his closeness. This is affirmed to us by Jesus in the Beatitudes: for instance, those who mourn, who are poor in spirit, who are persecuted are assured of God's blessing. Such closeness sustained John the Baptist in his mission of being the precursor of the Messiah. Today, a similar gift of grace is given to the faithful in Baptism, granting us the dignity of being priests, prophets and kings, all for the consolation of the people and the building up of the Kingdom of Heaven, which has suffered violence, and despite Christ's victory over sin and death, continues to suffer the assaults of the evil one. We never rest on our laurels, sitting back and waiting for salvation. No, instead, we co-operate with the Spirit to make God know to the nations.

The Memorial of Our Lady of Guadalupe – Friday 12th December 2025:

To confirm her appearance to Juan Diego, Our Lady imprints her image on his Tilma (cloak). In doing so, she shows the local bishop and the people that she is the *'Mother of the True God'*. Under her feet, is a crescent moon, a symbol of the Aztec religion. She, the mother of the true God, is more powerful than the false Aztec idols; and her hands are in prayer to one who is greater than she. The people saw the symbolism in the image. Standing in front of the sun, she is greater than their sun-God. Standing on the crescent moon, she has vanquished their foremost deity, the feathered serpent. The star on her mantle means she is greater than the stars of heaven, that she is virgin and queen. Despite their cruelty, Mary displays the Christian cross of the Spanish missionaries, showing that her God is Jesus Christ, and the God of the Spanish.

The memorial of St Lucy, virgin and martyr – Saturday 13th December 2025:

Lucy was a Sicilian, from the city of Syracuse, dying during the Diocletian persecutions. Tradition says she was dedicated to Christ and to the poor to whom she daily and willingly and freely gave of her wealth (which was considerable). One day, while walking home after giving alms, she was assaulted by a Roman soldier who tried to rape her. She successfully resisted him but in retaliation he denounced her to the authorities as a Christian. She was arrested, tortured and eventually executed. Legend says, they took her eyes because she radiated the light of Christ to all she met.