

Advent Mission Pilgrimage



Mission Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción
Mission San José y San Miguel de Aguayo
Mission San Juan Capistrano
Mission San Francisco de la Espada

“When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart.”

Jeremiah 29:13

Advent Pilgrimage

I. Mission Nuestra Senora de La Concepcion de Acuna est. 1716
moved to San Antonio 1731

A. Feast of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, Patroness
of the United States

B. Relationships, Mary, Mothers and Family

C. Prayer to Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception

D. O Come, O Come Emmanuel (first verse)

II. Mission San Jose y San Miguel de Aguayo est. 1720

A. Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

B. Bringing the Light of the World to Others

C. O Come, O Come Emmanuel (second verse)

III. Mission San Juan de Capistrano est. 1716 moved to San Antonio
1731

A. St. John the Apostle, Dec. 27

B. The Joy of the Gospel

C. O Come, O Come Emmanuel (third verse)

IV. Mission San Francisco de Espada est. 1690 moved to San Antonio
1731

A. St. Francis of Assisi - Promoter of the Christmas Creche

B. Prepare for the Messiah, the Lord

C. O Come, O Come Emmanuel (Fourth Verse)

V. Chaplet of Divine Mercy

VI. The Rosary

Preparation Prayer for a Mission Pilgrimage

**We begin this pilgrimage in the name of the Father and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit.**

R/. Amen

Peace be with you.

R/. And with your spirit.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, men and women through the ages have made great sacrifices to make a journey of faith so their relationship with you may be strengthened. Lord, we undertake this Advent pilgrimage not only on behalf of ourselves but also for all those we carry in our hearts and on behalf of the whole Church. Lord Jesus, be our companion as we walk with our brothers and sisters in faith. May “your Word be a lamp for my feet and a light for my path” (*Psalms 119: 105*). Lord, may our hearts “burn within us” (*Luke 24:32*) during this journey of faith.

Send your Holy Spirit that we may have contrite hearts ready to receive your graces and healing as we prepare for the coming of your Son. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R/. Amen.

“Gladden the soul of your servant; to you Lord, to you I lift up my soul. Lord, you are kind and forgiving, most loving to all who call to you. Lord, hear my prayer; listen to my cry for help.”

Psalm 86:4-6

Mission Nuestra Señora de la Concepción de Acuña

*Feast of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, Patroness of the United States -
December 8*

During the First week of Advent, we celebrate Mary under her title of the Immaculate Conception. She received this singular gift to prepare her to be the Mother of God. As Patroness of the United States, we ask Mary, who has a love who has never known sin, to strengthen our hearts with her constant faith to help us prepare for the arrival of Jesus her Divine Son.



“By contemplating our beautiful Immaculate Mother, let us also recognize our truest destiny, our deepest vocation: to be loved, to be transformed by love, to be transformed by the beauty of God. . . Let us allow ourselves to be watched over by her so that we may learn how to be more humble, and also more courageous in following the Word of God; to welcome the tender embrace of her Son Jesus, an embrace that gives us life, hope and peace.”

~ Pope Francis, Homily on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, December 8, 2013

Reflection

1. Do you have a personal relationship with Mary or does she feel more like a “concept” or an example of cultural Catholicism? How can you grow in your relationship with Mary as your mother?
2. Mary listens and hears the word of God announced by the angel Gabriel. How do we listen to the voice of God? What prevents us from hearing?
3. Mary made the ultimate commitment and accepted the sacrifice it entailed. How can she help us to be more humble and also more courageous in following the Word of God?

Prayer to Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception

*O most Holy Virgin, immaculate in body
and spirit, look kindly on me as I implore
your powerful intercession.*

*O most Holy Mother, receive my prayers
as I present them to God.
(state your intentions here)*

*O Mary, Mother of Jesus and our Mother,
you intercede for us with your Son.*

*O Mary conceived without sin,
pray for us who have recourse to thee.*

Amen.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear

Mission San José y San Miguel de Aguayo Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe – December 12

During the Second week of Advent on December 12, we celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of the Americas and Star of the New Evangelization. In 1531, the Mother of God appeared to a native Mexican, a convert to the Catholic faith named Juan Diego. She sent fresh, fragrant roses from the barren hilltop of Tepeyac to the local bishop who asked for a sign of her presence – but more importantly, her luminous image appeared on Juan Diego’s rough cactus fiber cloak, a tilma, which held the roses. This coarse garment, which would have ordinarily disintegrated after only a few years, is still in perfect condition with Our Lady’s image almost 500 years later.



*Central Stone
Façade – Our Lady
of Guadalupe –
Misión San José y
San Miguel de
Aguayo*

“Know for certain, littlest of my sons, that I am the perfect and perpetual Virgin Mary, Mother of the True God through Whom everything lives, the Lord of all things near and far, the Master of heaven and earth ... I am your merciful Mother. The merciful Mother of all of you who live united in this land, and of all mankind, of all those who love me. Here I will hear their weeping, their sorrow, and will remedy, and alleviate all their multiple sufferings, necessities and misfortunes ... Am I not here, I who am your Mother? Are you not under my shadow and protection? Am I not the source of your joy? Are you not in the hollow of my mantle, in the crossing of my arms? Do you need something more? Let nothing else worry you or disturb you.

~ Words of the Blessed Virgin Mary to St. Juan Diego, December 1531

Reflection

1. Mary is the Star of the New Evangelization because following her appearance, almost 9 million native persons were baptized within ten years, even after the Franciscan missionaries had previously little success. How are we participating in the New Evangelization today?
2. Pope St. John Paul II called Mary “Mother of the Americas.” How is her message relevant to all people of North, Central, and South America in the 21st century?
3. The Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City, built on the site where Mary appeared to St. Juan Diego, is the most visited Marian shrine in the world. As you make your Mission pilgrimage, what would you ask of her who says, “Am I not here, I who am your

Prayer

O Immaculate Virgin, Mother of the true God and Mother of the Church, who from this place revealed your mercy to all those who ask for your protection, hear our prayer present it to your Son Jesus, our Redeemer.

Mother of Mercy, Teacher of hidden and silent sacrifice, who comes to meet us sinners, we dedicate all our being and all our love to you. We also dedicate to you our life, our work, our joys, our infirmities and our sorrows. Grant us peace, justice and prosperity; for we entrust to your care all that we have and all that we are, our Lady and Mother. We wish to be entirely yours and to walk with you along the way of complete faithfulness to Jesus Christ in His Church; hold us always with your loving hand.

Virgin of Guadalupe, Mother of the Americas, we pray to you for all the clergy, that they may lead the faithful along paths of intense Christian life, of love and humble service of God and souls. Contemplate this immense harvest, and intercede with the Lord that He may instill a hunger for holiness in the whole people of God, and grant abundant vocations of priests and religious, strong in the faith and zealous dispensers of God’s mysteries.

Cont.

Grant to our homes the grace of loving and respecting life in its beginnings, with the same love with which you conceived in your womb the life of the Son of God. Blessed Virgin Mary, protect our families, so that they may always be united, and bless the upbringing of our children.

Our hope, look upon us with compassion, teach us to go continually to Jesus and, if we fall, help us to rise again, to return to Him, by means of the confession of our faults and sins in the Sacrament of Penance, which gives peace to the soul.

We beg you to grant us a great love for all the holy Sacraments, which are, as it were, the signs that your Son left us on earth.

Thus, Most Holy Mother, with the peace of God in our conscience, with our hearts free from evil and hatred, we will be able to bring to all true joy and true peace, which come to us from your son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who with God the Father and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Amen.

Prayer of St. John Paul II – Mexico City, January 1979. Visiting the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe during his first foreign trip as Pope

Song (or Recitation) – O Come O Come Emmanuel (second verse)

O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free
Thine own from Satan's tyranny
From depths of Hell Thy people save
And give them victory o'er the grave
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, o Israel

Mission San Juan Capistrano

St. John the Apostle - Dec. 27



During the Third week of Advent, we celebrate the virtue of Joy.. As one of his most faithful followers, St. John the Apostle gave Joy to Our Lord. Tradition gives him the title of the “beloved disciple.” On the eve of Christ’s Passion and Death, St. John gave comfort to Christ at the Last Supper. From the cross, Jesus entrusted St. John with the care of his Blessed Mother, and on the day of Christ’s resurrection, St. John outran Peter in his eagerness to give witness at the empty tomb. As the author of the fourth Gospel, St. John gives us details and stories about the Redeemer not found in any of the others. From his Gospel we have the Jesus’ first public miracle at the Wedding Feast in Cana; Jesus’ life-changing encounter with the Samaritan woman; and Jesus’ washing of his disciples’ feet at the Last Supper. All these reveal important aspects of who Jesus is – the Compassionate One, the Healer, the One who came to Serve - not Be Served. St. John began as a young, uneducated fisherman, but after spending time with Jesus, he was transformed into a man on a mission to tell the world about the Christ, the Anointed One who came into the world to save us, whom he met on the shores of Galilee.

Reflection

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”
—John 1:1-5

1. John’s Gospel includes a number of “I AM” statements made by Jesus; among them: I AM the Bread of Life/Living Bread—Jn. 6:35, 48, 51; I AM the Light of the World—Jn. 8:12; 9:5; Before Abraham was, I AM—Jn. 8:58. Who do you say Jesus is?
2. The Gospel of John is often called the "spiritual" Gospel. It explores the mystery Jesus’ divinity – exemplified by the fact that it begins with Christ’s spiritual origins rather than his nativity in Bethlehem described in other Gospels; helping believers understand the whole truth about the Messiah. What new light does Jesus’ divinity shed on the Christmas story of a new-born child? Why would this give us joy?
3. In the famous “Bread of Life Discourse” (John 6:32-58) Jesus very plainly says that, “those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day.” This was difficult for the disciples to hear, and many left Jesus that day. Jesus then reminds the Apostles that, “no one can come to me unless it is granted by my Father.” Which of Jesus’ teachings may be difficult for you to accept? How could you ask for help to accept, embrace and live what can be difficult for you?

Prayer: (From an ancient hymn to St. John the Apostle)

Oh writer most sublime,
Sweet teacher of the Word,
Partner of Mary's woes,
And favorite of the Lord!

His touch could heal the sick,
His voice could raise the dead;
Oh that my soul might be
Where He allows thy head.

Oh teach me then, dear Saint!
The secrets Christ taught thee;
The beatings of His Heart,
And how it beat for me!

Oh teach me then, dear Saint!
The secrets Christ taught thee;
The beatings of His Heart,
And how it beat for me!

When the last evening came,
Thy head was on His breast,
Pillowed on earth, where now
In heaven the Saints find rest.

The gifts He gave to you
He gave you to impart;
And I, too, claim with you
His Mother and His Heart!

Oh teach me then, dear Saint!
The secrets Christ taught thee;
The beatings of His Heart,
And how it beat for me!

Oh teach me then, dear Saint!
The secrets Christ taught thee;
The beatings of His Heart,
And how it beat for me!

Song (or Recitation) – O Come O Come Emmanuel (Third Verse)

O come, Thou Day-Spring
Come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night
And death's dark shadows put to flight
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, o Israel



San Francisco de la Espada

St. Francis of Assisi – Promoter of the Christmas Crèche

During the Fourth week of Advent, we celebrate the virtue of Love as Christmas draws near. According to tradition, it was St. Francis of Assisi who popularized the before little-known custom of the “Lord’s crib” at Christmastime. St. Bonaventure, in his Life of St. Francis of Assisi tells the story best: *“It happened in the third year before his death, that in order to excite the inhabitants of Grecio to commemorate the nativity of the Infant Jesus with great devotion, [St. Francis] ... prepared a manger, and brought hay, and an ox and an ass to the place appointed, a cave outside the town. The brethren were summoned, the people ran together, the forest resounded with their voices, and that venerable night was made glorious by many and brilliant lights and sonorous psalms of praise. The man of God [St. Francis] stood before the manger, full of devotion and piety, bathed in tears and radiant with joy ... Then he preached to the people around the nativity of the poor King; and being unable to utter His name for the tenderness of His love, He called Him the Babe of Bethlehem.”*



“Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.”

—Luke 2: 10-12

Reflection

“God’s sign is simplicity. God’s sign is the baby. God’s sign is that He makes Himself small for us. This is how He reigns. He does not come with power and outward splendor. He comes as a baby — defenseless and in need of our help. He does not want to overwhelm us with His strength. He takes away our fear of His greatness. He asks for our love: so He makes Himself a child. He wants nothing other from us than our love, through which we spontaneously learn to enter into His feelings, His thoughts and His will — we learn to live with Him and to practice with Him that humility of renunciation that belongs to the very essence of love. God made Himself small so that we could understand Him, welcome Him and love Him.”

Pope Benedict XVI, from his homily at midnight Mass, Christmas 2006

Prayer

Prayer: Lord our God, hear the prayers of your people. Bless and strengthen us to be bearers of your mercy and love. May we who celebrate the birth of your Son as man share more fully in his divine life and rejoice when he comes again in glory. Amen.

Song (or Recitation) – O Come O Come Emmanuel (Fourth Verse)

O come, Thou Key of David, come
And open wide our heavenly home
Make safe the way that leads on high
And close the path to misery
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, o Israel



“When you look into muddy or choppy water, you will not see your face reflected. If you want the face of Christ who looks on you to be reflected within you, come away from the disturbance of exterior things, and let your soul be at peace.”

– St. Anthony of Padua

Concluding Prayer

**As we conclude this pilgrimage, let us pray in the words Our Savior taught us.
Our Father...**

The Lord be with you.

R/. And with your spirit.

**May Almighty God bless you in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of
the Holy Spirit.**

R/. Amen

Chaplet of Divine Mercy

(Repeat 3 times) O Blood and Water, which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus as
a fountain of Mercy for us, I trust in You!

Our Father, Hail Mary and the Apostle's Creed

For each of the five decades (On each "Our Father" bead of the rosary, pray)

Eternal Father, I offer you the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your Dearly
Beloved Son, Our Lord, Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and those of the
whole world.

(On each of the 10 "Hail Mary" beads, pray)

For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

Concluding prayer (Repeat 3 times)

Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the
whole world.

Optional Closing Prayer:

Eternal God, in whom mercy is endless and the treasury of compassion
inexhaustible, look kindly upon us and increase Your mercy in us, that in difficult
moments we might not despair nor become despondent, but with great confidence
submit ourselves to Your holy will, which is Love and Mercy itself

The Magnificat

My soul magnifies the Lord

And my spirit rejoices in God my Savior;

Because He has regarded the lowliness of His handmaid;

For behold, henceforth all generations shall call me blessed;

Because He who is mighty has done great things for me,
and holy is His name;

And His mercy is from generation to generation
on those who fear Him.

He has shown might with His arm,

He has scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart.

He has put down the mighty from their thrones,
and has exalted the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich He has sent away empty.

He has given help to Israel, his servant, mindful of His mercy

Even as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his posterity forever.

Amen



The Rosary

1. On the crucifix, make the sign of the cross and then pray the Apostles' Creed:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified; died, and was buried. He descended into Hell; the third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

2. On the next Large bead, say the Our Father

3. On the following three small beads, pray three Hail Mary's

4. On the chain, pray the Glory Be.

5. On the large bead, meditate on the first mystery and pray the Our Father.

6. Skip the centerpiece medallion, and on the ten beads pray the Hail Mary; on the chain pray a Glory Be.

7. Repeat steps 5 and 6 four more times

8. *Fatima Prayer* may be added after the Glory Be and before the next Our Father:
O My Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell and lead all souls to heaven, especially those in most need of Thy mercy. Amen

9. At the end say the Hail Holy Queen:

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve, to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us; and after this our exile show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb Jesus, O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.
Pray for us, O holy Mother of God. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

O God, whose only-begotten Son, by His life, death, and resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal salvation; grant we beseech Thee, that meditating upon these mysteries of the most holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Joyful Mysteries

The Annunciation

And when the angel had come to her, he said, "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women."

(Luke 1:28)

The Visitation

Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and cried out in a loud voice: "Blest are you among women and blest is the fruit of your womb"

(Luke 1:41—42)

The Birth of Jesus

She gave birth to her first-born Son and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the place where travelers lodged.

(Luke 2:7)

The Presentation

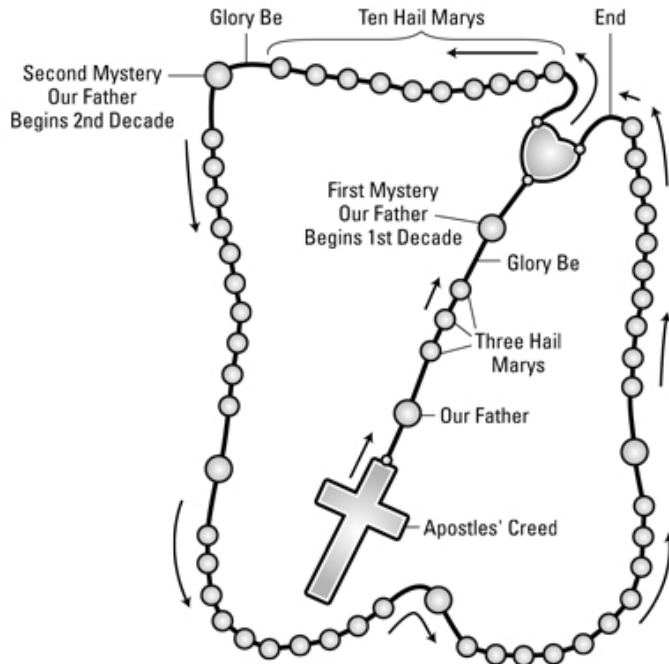
She gave birth to her first-born Son and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the place where travelers lodged.

(Luke 2:22-23)

Finding the Child Jesus in the Temple

On the third day they came upon Him in the temple sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.

(Luke 2:46)



Prayers for Lighting the Advent Wreath Candles

First Week

All-powerful God, increase our strength of will for doing good that Christ may find an eager welcome at his coming and call us to his side in the kingdom of heaven, where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit one God, forever and ever.

Amen.

Second Week

God of power and mercy open our hearts in welcome. Remove the things that hinder us from receiving Christ with joy so that we may share his wisdom and become one with him when he comes in glory, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

Amen.

Third Week

Lord God, may we, your people, who look forward to the birthday of Christ experience the joy of salvation and celebrate that feast with love and thanksgiving. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Fourth Week

All-powerful God, your eternal Word took flesh on our earth when the Virgin Mary placed her life at the service of your plan. Lift our minds in watchful hope to hear the voice which announces his glory and open our minds to receive the Spirit who prepares us for his coming. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Advent Prayer

Lord Jesus,

Master of both the light and the darkness, send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas.

We who have so much to do and seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day,

We who are anxious over many things look forward to your coming among us.

We who are blessed in so many ways long for the complete joy of your kingdom.

We whose hearts are heavy seek the joy of your presence.

We are your people, walking in darkness, yet seeking the light.

To you we say, "Come Lord Jesus!"-Amen.

Henri J.M. Nouwen

