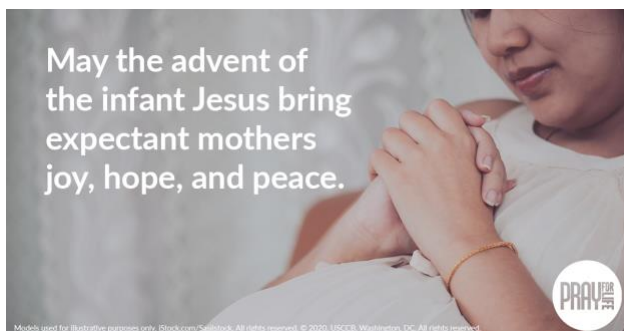


INTERCEDE



PRAY

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

REFLECT

Each year during Advent, we prepare our hearts to celebrate the birth of Christ our Savior at Christmas. As we anticipate this joyful celebration, we recall the journey of the Holy Family from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Far from home, poor, and in great need, Mary and Joseph find refuge in a simple stable. But this humble setting among the livestock soon welcomes the heavenly host of angels and the infant Jesus himself.

Today, women in our own communities are pregnant, poor, perhaps without a home, and in great need. They may feel alone, scared, and overwhelmed, not knowing where to turn. In challenging circumstances, expectant mothers need a refuge of their own. Like the Holy Family, they may be reliant on the kindness of others. This year, may the story of the first Christmas inspire us to reach out to mothers in need. May we proactively seek to offer loving support and encouragement as they prepare to welcome their children. By answering this call, may we help mothers experience the joy, hope, and peace brought by the infant Jesus. And may we, too, share in and bear witness to the miracle of new life.

ACT (choose one)

- On December 8, we celebrate the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Offer Pope Francis' Prayer for the Immaculate Conception for this month's intention: uscgb.org/prayer-for-the-immaculate-conception.
- Contact your local pregnancy resource center or diocesan/parish pregnancy support ministry. Ask about ways you can help, such as volunteering or donating baby items.
- Offer some other sacrifice or prayer that you feel called to do for this month's intention.

ONE STEP FURTHER

Learn more about how you can support mothers by following [@walkingwithmoms](https://www.instagram.com/walkingwithmoms) on Instagram!

DID YOU KNOW?

The Immaculate Conception (www.bit.ly/immaculate-conception-2020) celebrates the conception of Mary in the womb of St. Anne without the stain of original sin. This solemnity is sometimes confused with the Annunciation, in which the Church celebrates the conception of Jesus in the womb of the Blessed Mother. While it's important to understand this distinction, both celebrations highlight the beauty and goodness of God's gift of new life.



Image: A mosaic of Our Lady of Guadalupe decorates a side altar in the Church of Santa Maria della Famiglia at the Vatican. Dec. 15. (CNS photo/Paul Haring.)