

**Homily – First Sunday of Advent
Mass with Children at Holy Trinity – December 1, 2024**

Good morning! I want to know who has a Christmas tree already put up at home. Pope Francis has said that the Christmas tree, *“with its lights, reminds us of Jesus who comes to illuminate our darkness, our existence which is often closed up in the shadow of sin, fear and pain.”* There are still four weeks until Christmas, but today we are beginning to prepare. This four-week season is called Advent.

Have you noticed the star at the top of a Christmas tree? It’s so bright and beautiful, isn’t it? It catches our eye and seems to invite us to look up, wonder, and hope. That star is a very special sign. It reminds us of the star that led the Wise Men to the place where Jesus was born. It also reminds us of something even more exciting: Jesus comes into our hearts every day if we let Him.

At this time of the year, the days are getting colder and darker. It might feel a little gloomy, but it’s a good reminder that everything in life changes. The star is a symbol of God’s promise, that after darkness comes light, and after the cold comes warmth. This is what God promises us: new and brighter days! But we need to be ready! That’s why we need to prepare our hearts, just like a family gets ready for a new baby – full of joy, love, and hope.

One great way to prepare is by sharing love with others. Have you heard of Saint Nicholas? This coming Saturday we will celebrate his feast day. Saint Nicholas helped poor people by giving them gifts. He showed us that when we share out of love, everyone has enough, and we all feel happier. Love doesn’t run out when we give it away – it grows!

So as you see the Christmas lights and the Nativity scene, remember: Jesus is coming to bring light and love to our world and to our hearts. Let's prepare by loving others, praying, and staying close to God.

And when you see the star on the tree, look up! Lift your heads high, because Jesus is coming to bring us joy and hope. Pray to Our Lady of Guadalupe. Ask her to help us be ready to welcome the baby she has in her belly!