

Advent is a time of prayerful and patient preparation for the celebration of Jesus' birth over 2000 years ago. It is also a time to prepare our hearts for a greater interior reception of Jesus' presence now as well as prayerful anticipation for Jesus' Second Coming. We observe this season through acts of prayer, penance, and—not least of all—almsgiving. Just as God gave to us His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, so too we must follow His example and give of ourselves to others – especially our less fortunate sisters and brothers.

Each week throughout Advent, everyone is invited to take an ornament from our annual **Giving Tree**. Each week's ornament offers a means to share our blessings with others. As we will see, by giving we also receive.

### **First week of Advent – December 1-2**

These ornaments will have a name or description of someone for whom you are asked to purchase a gift. The names of those in need come from Hope House, an archdiocesan ministry serving the poor in the St. Thomas/Irish Channel community. **Please bring your gift to church, wrapped and with the ornament taped to the front, on the weekend of December 8-9.**

### **Second week of Advent – December 8-9**

This week's ornament specifies a particular type of canned good or household item needed to stock our Food Pantry operated by our St. Vincent de Paul Society. **Boxes will be available in the back of church on the weekend of December 15-16 to receive your food gifts.**

### **Third week of Advent – December 15-16**

This week, we select an ornament that cites a quotation from Scripture. Place this ornament in a prominent place in your home, perhaps the dinner table, where you can read it often, reflect and pray on it, and share in the family circle just what it means to us and to our lives.

### **Fourth week of Advent – December 22-23**

Our holiday preparations should be all completed. Take the time now to reflect on the birth of Jesus and let His love shed light on all that you do in the year ahead.