

Kidane-Mehret

Ge'ez Rite Ethiopian Catholic Parish



December 2025

Rev. Abayneh Gebremichael, M.A., B.C.C., Pastor

1717 Ritchie Road
District Heights
Maryland 20747

Sunday

Divine Liturgy at 10:30 AM

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Website: www.kidane-mehret.org **Online giving** <https://www.osvonlinegiving/4757>

Important Parish Information

Newcomers to the parish: Please fill out your full names and addresses on the Registration Form. The Catholic Church requires that each member of a parish, to the extent allowed by his income, support the day-to-day running of the parish's pastoral activities.

Sacraments and Pastoral Care

Baptisms: Please telephone your pastor at the office to make an appointment to fill out the form and make the necessary arrangements. **Marriages:** It is the policy of the Archdiocese of Washington that couples proposing to marry must first contact, or see, a priest or deacon at least six months prior to the date on which they intend to marry for Marriage Preparation classes. All Catholics are bound to observe the laws of the Church concerning marriage. **Confessions:** are heard before the start of the Divine Liturgy, and any other time by appointment. **Funerals:** Contact your pastor at the parish office to make arrangements. **Hospital Visits:** Notify the pastor if a family member is hospitalized. **Mass Intentions (Stipend):** \$25.00. This is for Memorial Masses, thanksgivings, or petitions.

Reflection

"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh." (Ezekiel 36:26)

We are in the sacred season of Advent—a time of holy waiting, a time when the Church prepares to celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Advent is the anticipation of Christmas, the birthday of Christ, but it is more than a date on the calendar. It is an invitation for Christ to be born again in our own hearts, in our families, in our community, and in our world.



As we wait for the coming of our Lord, let us prepare ourselves with renewed hearts. Let us adore Him, for He is the Author and Giver of our lives. We do not wait in idleness; we wait with prayer, with longing, and with hope.

In our Ethiopian tradition, this season is known as the Fast of the Prophets. The prophets of the Old Testament fasted and prayed as they longed for the coming of the Messiah. We follow in their footsteps—fasting, praying, and preparing our souls for the One who brings salvation. But how do we prepare the way of the Lord today?

We prepare by seeking peace with our neighbors, by reconciling with God, and by healing our relationships with our brothers and sisters. We prepare by opening our hearts

to the poor, the lonely, and the suffering. For when we serve the least among us, we welcome Christ Himself.

Advent calls us to a joyful waiting—a waiting filled with love, mercy, and compassion. Let us welcome Christ not only in the manger of Bethlehem but also in the manger of our own hearts. Let us make room for Him in our homes, our church, and our daily life.

May this Advent season be a time of spiritual renewal, of deep prayer, of fasting with purpose, and of love in action. And when Christmas morning comes, may Christ find us ready—waiting with rejoicing hearts.

Prayer

Father in heaven, our hearts desire the warmth of your love and our minds are searching for the light of your Word. Increase our longing for Christ our Savior and give us the strength to grow in love, that the dawn of his coming may find us rejoicing in his presence and welcoming the light of his truth. We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord. Amen.

Mass Readings:

Dec 7: 1Cor 2:1-16; 1JN 5:1-5; JN 9:1-41.

Dec 14: 1Cor 15:12-32; 2Pet 3:10-18; LK 12:32-40.

Dec 21: Heb 1: 1-14; 2Pet 3: 1-9; JN 1: 44-51.

Dec 28: RM 13:11-14; 1JN 1: 1-10; JN 1:1-8.

Offerings for November

Date	Tithes	Sunday Offering	Building Fund	All Soul's Day
11/10	\$970	\$462	\$100	\$110
11/17	\$465	\$359		
11/17	\$870	\$741		
11/17	\$539			
11/24	\$300	\$658		
Online	\$2051	\$1231	\$250	
Total	\$4656	\$3990	\$350	\$110

Let us pray for:

Our families to be beacons of light and God's love in our neighborhoods.

For the Holy Father's intentions for December : Let us pray that Christians living in areas of war or conflict, especially in the Middle East, might be seeds of peace, reconciliation, and hope.

What does God tell us about His plans?

In America, Thanksgiving, a secular public holiday, falls at the end of November and ushers in a Christmas shopping spree. The stores are filled with goodies packaged in brilliant glittering colors, boxes of candies fill the shelves, even bottles of alcohol are made to look festive. There are sales on everything as people spend money prolifically. Evergreen trees are stacked outside for sale, waiting for people to decorate them with brilliant baubles and shining little colored lights. Is this what the Church really wants from us as we prepare to celebrate Christmas or the Incarnation of Emmanuel?

The decoration of trees, as we know them today, has various explanations. One is that the Christmas Tree represented both the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil and the Tree of Life. The red and green glittery baubles represented the red and green apples that tempted Adam and Eve whereas the small candies that were also placed on the tree represented the Eucharist. In those early Christmas Trees we could contemplate God's entire plan for the salvation of mankind.



This time before Christmas is called Advent in the Latin Rite calendar. We, in our Rite, call it Tsome Nebyat or Asemhero. It is not a time for wild parties but a time of solemn preparation, not only for welcoming the Christ Child this Christmas but also for the Parousia, His second coming, or when we come face to face with Him at the time of our death.

From the very beginning, the Church has set aside time to prepare for the coming of God Himself into the world. If we recall the prophets of the Old Testament, particularly Isaiah, we remember countless promises of God to send help to a miserable world. In the many battles we read about in the Old Testament, we witness God's Mercy in many the miraculous defeats of the pagans who were trying to exterminate God's chosen people. However, the Israelites did not fully believe.

They made God's Law of Love impossible to keep. To them, love was no longer the basis of the law, but rather harsh justice, practiced under the yoke of various pagan tyrants. However, they clung to the belief that God would do something about their situation but they have never understood how to interpret the plan that God is still unfolding for them. Isaiah told them that "a virgin shall conceive" but they did not recognize Jesus when He was born. The prophet Habakkuk told them that

*His glory covered the heavens,
and his praise filled the earth;
his splendor spread like the light.
He raised his horns high,
he rejoiced on the day of his strength. (Hab3:3-4)*

but the Star of Bethlehem didn't register in their minds, the song of the angels at the time of His birth did not fulfill this in their minds, and neither did His many miracles. Even when Stephen, the first martyr was stoned to death they didn't believe. The Acts of the Apostles tells us that St. Steven laid out the history of Israel for the Pharisees and Sadducees but they did not want to listen or believe. It would have disrupted their comfortable but precarious relationship with the Romans. "You received the law as transmitted by angels, but you did not observe it," St. Steven told them. "When they heard this, they were infuriated, and they ground their teeth at him. But he, filled with the holy Spirit, looked up intently to heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God." (Acts 7: 53-55). Even though they saw his transformation as he gazed on the glory of God, they refused to believe. The Jews of Jesus time had the most compelling evidence of God's fulfillment of His plan for the Jews and the whole world, Jesus Himself, but they refused to believe or listen.

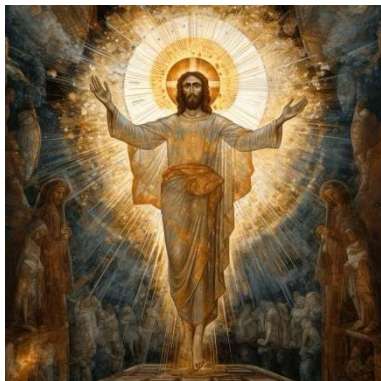
The Church also uses Advent to prepare our hearts and minds for Jesus's Second Coming. Will we be ready? Will we receive Him joyfully?

For us to be ready, we need to observe penitential ways during this Liturgical season. We need to prepare sacramentally through confession; by going to the Divine Liturgy or Mass on a daily basis if possible so we can come closer to Our Lord. We need to practice virtues like generosity through almsgiving. Reading Holy Scripture is another way of getting to know God better. Family Advent prayers and activities also help Jesus' love grow in our hearts. Then, when Christmas dawns our love for our families, friends, fellow parishioners, for everyone, can burst forth with great joy, spilling out across the whole world so that all may know and believe that our God lives and reigns, even as a small baby in a manger.

For Our Younger Parishioners...

Before Christmas we spend time looking at God's plan for humanity. This time is called Advent. God never does anything without preparing us first so that we recognize and understand His actions. His plan has three parts to it. The first section is found in the Old Testament of the Bible. Because Adam and Eve sinned, the peaceful and loving life God envisioned for them and their descendants was shattered. God had warned them not to eat the fruit of a particular tree, the Tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil. However, there was another tree in Eden. It was called the Tree of Life. He sent them out of Eden to save them from eating the fruit of that tree and living evil lives even in eternity. But He loved them and wanted them and their descendants to live forever with Him. So He came up with a glorious plan and He began preparing us.

In the Old Testament we hear about things like Noah's Ark and the grim reasons for the great flood. Mankind just did not listen to their Creator. We hear about Abraham and his family and how they ended up living in Egypt. We hear about Moses who brought them out of slavery in Egypt to the promised land, a land flowing with milk and honey. Then He sent the Prophets. Men like Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Zephaniah, who listened to God, believed Him and told the Israelites exactly what God told them. He told them that He would send a Messiah, born of a young woman, to save them from their sins.



Then we move on to the New Testament which tells us how He brought His plan to fulfillment. He sent John the Baptist to prepare them for the coming of the Emmanuel, God with Us. We all know about the Star over Bethlehem, about the angels filling the sky and singing praises to God. We know about the birth of Jesus in a stable and coming of the three Kings. We know that Jesus grew up in Nazareth. We know of His miracles and teachings. We know how He was rejected by the Jewish rulers, condemned by Pontius Pilate for fake charges levelled at Him by the Pharisees and Sadducees. We know He was crucified. He conquered Death by rising from the dead. We rejoice that He left us the Bread from Heaven, the Eucharist, that would give us Life in Him so that, when we die, we can be in Heaven with God forever.

The third part of Advent preparation is learning about His Second Coming when He comes again in His glory to take His followers to be with Him forever.

News from Around the World

The Vatican Press Office reports:

Franciscan Capuchin Friars are bringing aid to Indonesia where at least 800 people are dead and over 550 are still missing after a tropical cyclone caused floods and landslides across the provinces of West Sumatra, North Sumatra and Aceh. The death toll is expected to rise as rescuers struggle to reach remote villages. At least a million others are displaced.

The Capuchin Friars of Sibolga mobilised all their resources after Tropical Cyclone Senyar brought torrential rains, floods, and landslides to the nation and beyond. They are evacuating people, providing aid, and accompanying the displaced throughout the territory of their diocese.



thanked Patriarch Bartholomew I, Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, for his "great wisdom and foresight" in calling for Church leaders to celebrate this important anniversary together.

Pope Leo recalled that the Council of Nicaea was held in 325, saying it invites all Christians, even today, to ask ourselves who Jesus Christ is for us personally.

Pope Leo in Türkiye, The site of Nicaea: By Devin Watkins

At the site of ancient Nicaea, Pope Leo XIV joined around 27 other leaders of Christian Churches to commemorate the 1,700th anniversary of the First Ecumenical Council in the Church's history.

The ecumenical prayer service took place on the second day of the Pope's Apostolic Journey to Türkiye.

In his address, the Pope



“This question is especially important for Christians,” he said, “who risk reducing Jesus Christ to a kind of charismatic leader or superman, a misrepresentation that ultimately leads to sadness and confusion.”