

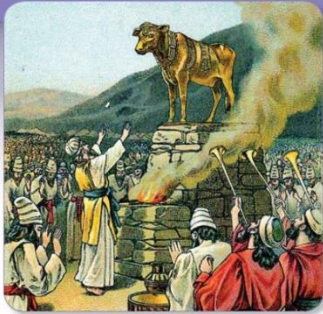
Advent 2019 – The Year of the Jesse Tree

Third Week

Most of the information is excerpted from *The Stories of the Old Testament: A Catholic's Guide* by Jim Campbell. Learn more at www.loyolapress.com

Credit: Loyola Press

THE JESSE TREE



Ornament

Stone Altar

ELIJAH

Elijah Fights the False Gods

God now calls Elijah to confront Ahab and pagan gods. He is going into enemy territory: Jezebel is killing off the prophets of Israel. In spite of the danger, Elijah is not put off. When he meets with the king, Ahab calls Elijah the "troubler of Israel." Elijah responds by challenging the priests of Baal and Asherah to a contest with the God of Israel.

- Elijah Is Fed by God *1 Kings 17*
- Elijah Confronts Baal *1 Kings 18*
- The Still Small Voice *1 Kings 19*

THE JESSE TREE



Ornament

Fire Tongs with Hot Coal

ISAIAH

Isaiah and the Call to Holiness

In response, one of the seraphs flies to Isaiah with a live coal taken from the altar and touches his lips with it, declaring that his guilt has departed. Isaiah then hears the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And Isaiah replies, "Here am I; send me!" (Isaiah 6:8).

- Isaiah's Vision *Isaiah 6*
- Isaiah's Message *Isaiah 1-2*
- A Savior Will Come *Isaiah 9; 11*

THE JESSE TREE



Ornament

Tears

JEREMIAH

Jeremiah the Prophet

Jeremiah teaches that the people cannot pray faithfully if they continue to oppress the immigrants, the orphans, and the widows. They have to stop shedding innocent blood (some practiced human sacrifice), and they must act justly toward one another. "Here you are, trusting in deceptive words to no avail. Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, make offerings to Baal, and go after other gods that you have not known, and then come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, 'We are safe!' —only to go on doing all these abominations? Has this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your sight? You know, I too am watching, says the LORD" (Jeremiah 7:8-11).

- Jeremiah's Temple Sermon *Jeremiah 7; 26*
- Jeremiah Speaks Against Jerusalem *Jeremiah 28*
- Sorrow for the Fall of Judah *Lamentations 1*
- Jeremiah's Message of Hope *Jeremiah 29; 31*

THE JESSE TREE



Ornament

Stone Watchtower

HABAKKUK

Habakkuk: Patient Waiting

Acknowledging that he does not understand God's will, Habakkuk stands ready to hear what God has planned. God assures Habakkuk that no matter what seems to be happening on the surface, God's ultimate plan for the Judeans who live in faithfulness will not be delayed. "For there is still a vision for the appointed time; it speaks of the end, and does not lie. If it seems to tarry, wait for it; it will surely come, it will not delay" (Habakkuk 2:3).

- The Sack of Jerusalem and the Fall of Judah *2 Kings 24-25*

THE JESSE TREE



Ornament

Scallop Shell

JOHN THE BAPTIST

John the Baptist Preaches Repentance

Jesus had immense respect for John the Baptist, saying: "Among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist" (Matthew 11:11). John was called by God to be a prophet and prepared himself to follow this call. Dedication to a goal means some reevaluation of priorities. John apparently wanted to be free of any obligations except getting ready to proclaim the coming of the Messiah. He wanted people to know that the time for the Messiah to come was near. This meant that their priorities in life needed to be reconsidered. When we realize that we are being called to a new life in Christ, we have to consider what sacrifices we are going to be called to make to change our lives. While we will not be called to the extremes that John the Baptist was, we also need to recognize that life has to be different if we are going to be faithful.

- John the Baptist Preaches Repentance *Luke 3:1-6*
- Messengers from John the Baptist *Matthew 11:2-11*

THE JESSE TREE



Ornament

White Lily

MARY

The Annunciation

When we think of heroes in Scripture, Mary, the mother of Jesus, does not usually come to mind. But consider the risks she was taking when she said yes to becoming the mother of the Messiah (Luke 1:38): she was a young girl of about sixteen years old living in a small village where every secret is known and every fault is criticized. She lived in an occupied land and could be subject to any command from the occupying army. She faced an unknown future. The experience of speaking to God's messenger must have been terrifying in itself. It is perhaps fitting that we consider Mary our greatest hero, leader, champion, and saint. Her decision made it possible for us to discover what it means to live in Jesus.

- The Annunciation *Luke 1:26-38*

THE JESSE TREE



Ornament

Mary and Elizabeth Embracing

ELIZABETH

Mary Visits Elizabeth

After the angel left Mary, she immediately went to see her cousin Elizabeth. Mary had learned from Gabriel that Elizabeth would soon have a son who would grow up to be John the Baptist. As Mary comes into her presence, Elizabeth experiences the Holy Spirit filling her life. She calls out to Mary the words of blessing we repeat with every Hail Mary: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb." (Luke 1:42) Elizabeth then asks, "And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me?" (Luke 1:43) These recall the words of King David when the Ark of the Covenant was brought back to Jerusalem, "How can the ark of the LORD come into my care?" (2 Samuel 6:9) Just as the Ark of the Covenant symbolized the presence of the Lord, the God of Israel, Mary's visit sanctifies Elizabeth's home with the presence of the Lord.

- The Visitation *Luke 1:39-45*