

# How to Set Up Daily Advent Reflection Emails for Your Parishioners

A step-by-step guide



# Why Set Up Daily Advent Emails for Your Parish?

Advent is a season of preparation, reflection, and anticipation as we journey toward the celebration of Christ's birth. While many wonderful resources are available for individual reflection, sending daily Advent emails directly from your parish offers a unique opportunity to keep your community spiritually connected and engaged.

By providing parishioners with thoughtful reflections from their own parish, you create a shared experience that extends beyond the church walls. This can serve as a daily spiritual touchpoint, encouraging deeper reflection while fostering a sense of community.

You can use the free Advent reflection content we're offering, or get creative—invite a parish volunteer or staff member to write the reflections, or even share your parish priest's homilies from a previous liturgical year that correspond with the 2024 Gospel readings.

This simple practice can also spark deeper engagement, leading to the formation of Advent discussion groups.

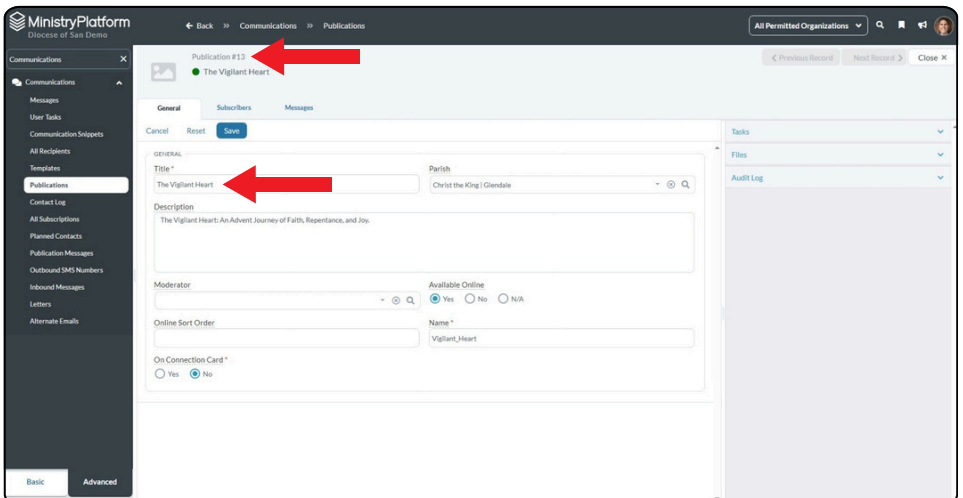
Whether you use our content or create your own, these daily emails can help draw your parish closer together in faith, repentance, and joy.

# Step 1: Create a New Digital Publication

Start by setting up a new digital publication in MinistryPlatform to track subscriptions for "The Vigilant Heart: An Advent Journey of Faith, Repentance, and Joy." This will allow parishioners to sign up and receive daily Advent reflections via email.

Here's how to set it up:

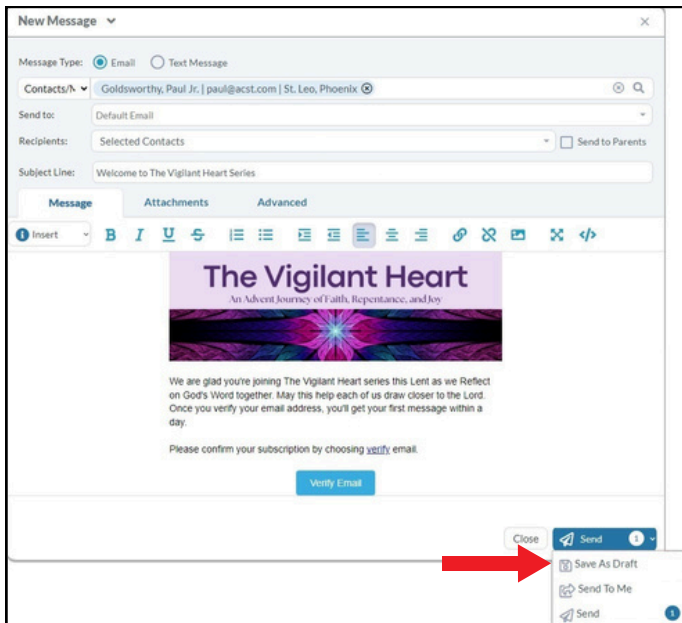
1. Go to your MinistryPlatform dashboard and select the option to create a new publication.
2. Give the publication a name and description related to "The Vigilant Heart" series.
3. Save the publication and note the publication record number. You'll need this to configure your website in the next step.



# Step 2: Create a Verification Email

Once the publication is created, set up a confirmation email to send to parishioners after they sign up.

1. In MinistryPlatform, create a new message. This will be the verification email parishioners receive when they sign up for the Advent reflection series.
2. Customize the subject line and body of the message. Include a welcoming introduction and instructions to confirm their subscription by clicking a link.
3. Insert the "Verify" link, which contains a token allowing MinistryPlatform to verify the email address.
4. Save the message as a draft to get the message ID record number, which you'll use later to configure the sign-up form on your website.



# Step 3: Add a Sign-Up Page to Your Website

Next, create a page on your parish website where people can sign up to receive daily Advent reflections.

1. Create a new page on your website using your site's content management system (CMS). Depending on
2. your website tool, add the necessary HTML components.
3. Use the Subscribe to Publication widget in MinistryPlatform to integrate the subscription form on your webpage.
4. Plug the publication ID and message ID (from the previous steps) into the configuration tool, which will generate the HTML code for you.
5. Copy and paste the generated code into your website's HTML editor and save the changes.
6. Publish the page to make the Advent reflection sign-up live on your website.

The screenshot shows the 'MinistryPlatform' Help Center interface. On the left is a navigation menu with categories like 'Help Topics', 'Video Library', 'What's New', 'Widget Configurator', 'Developer Resources', and 'Privacy & Security'. The main content area is titled 'MinistryPlatform' and contains instructions for configuring the 'Subscribe to Publications' widget. A dropdown menu is set to 'Subscribe to Publications'. Below this is a table for 'Update Subscribe to Publications Widget Parameters'.

Setting Name	My Value	Description
Publication ID *	13	Determines which Publication will be displayed.
Return URL *	subscribe	URL the widget exists on. The verification email will use this to complete the subscription and display confirmations.
Verification Email Template *	4098	Email containing a verification link which will complete the subscription.
CustomCSS		Optional Path to a CustomCSS Style Sheet to be applied to this widget.

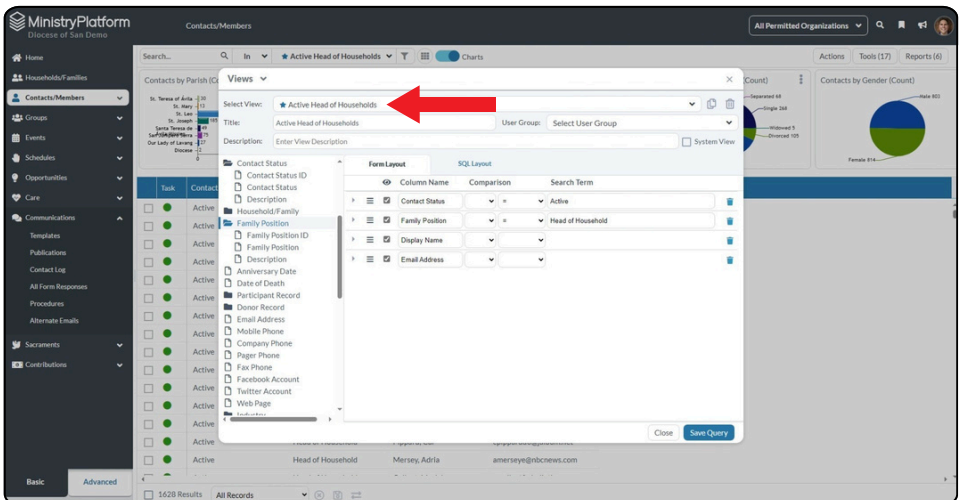
Below the table is a 'Preview & Copy' section with a code block containing the following HTML snippet:

```
<app-subscribe-to-publication publicationId="13" returnUrl="subscribe" verificationEmailTemplateId="4098"></app-subscribe-to-publication>
```

# Step 4: Invite Parishioners to Sign Up

Now that your publication and sign-up page are live, it's time to invite your parishioners to join "The Vigilant Heart" Advent series.

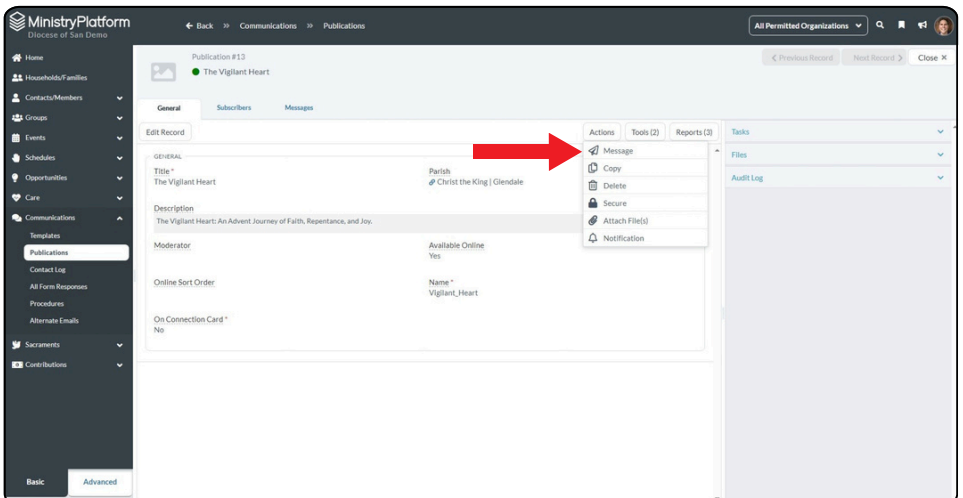
1. From MinistryPlatform, filter your parishioner list to target key groups, such as heads of households or active parishioners.
2. Create an invitation email encouraging them to subscribe to the Advent reflections. You can build the email from scratch using the integrated editor or select a template from the library for quick setup.
3. Send the invitation email and include a link to your new sign-up page.



# Step 5: Send Daily Advent Reflections

As parishioners sign up and verify their email addresses, they will be added to the Subscribers list under your publication in MinistryPlatform.

1. To send a daily Advent reflection, open the publication and navigate to the Actions > Message section.
2. Post your reflection message here. You can use your own content or copy and paste the reflections provided by ACST Catholic for "The Vigilant Heart" series.
3. If you want to schedule messages in advance, select the Advanced tab, choose the date and time for delivery, and click Send. The message will automatically go out on the selected date.



The screenshot displays the MinistryPlatform interface for a publication titled "The Vigilant Heart". The interface is divided into a left sidebar, a main content area, and a right sidebar. The left sidebar contains navigation options such as Home, Households/Families, Contacts/Members, Groups, Events, Schedules, Opportunities, Cars, Communications, and Templates. The main content area shows the publication details, including the title "The Vigilant Heart", the parish "Christ the King | Glendale", and the description "The Vigilant Heart: An Advent Journey of Faith, Repentance, and Joy." A red arrow points to the "Message" action in the "Actions" menu. The right sidebar contains sections for Tasks, Files, and Audit Log.

# You're All Set!

By following these steps, your parish can effectively engage parishioners throughout Advent, helping them grow in faith through daily reflections.

## About MinistryPlatform

MinistryPlatform is a powerful and flexible church management tool designed to accompany and support parishioners on their faith journey. It enhances engagement, streamlines operations, and manages facilities while fostering a deeper connection within the church community. Schedule a free, no-obligation demo! Visit [ministryplatform.com/demo](https://ministryplatform.com/demo).

## About ACST Catholic

ACST Catholic, a business of ACS Technologies, is devoted to serving and equipping Catholic parishes and dioceses with the tools to engage, inspire, and accompany their communities and form missionary disciples. By harnessing technology as a tool for connection and growth, we amplify ministry impact and foster more meaningful experiences that can lead to intentional discipleship.