



What is Advent?

Advent begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas. It always ends on December 24th.

It is a very special time of the year during which we get ready for the arrival of Jesus. We can do this by using these days to fill up our hearts and souls with love for Him.

You might have heard people say that it is important to “Keep Christ in Christmas.” This means we should use these special days to focus on HOPE, FAITH, JOY, and PEACE. These are the very best gifts we can give to the people we love. These are the gifts Jesus really wants us to give.

Create Your Advent Wreath

Build your Advent wreath today! This special wreath will help you get ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus on Christmas day. Ask a grown-up to help you.

You will need 3 tall purple candles and 1 pink candle.

You also need a wreath. It does not need to be fancy. Make it from greens, or a garland, or paper, or you might have an even better idea!

Lay your wreath in the center of your dinner table. Now, use candle holders to stand the candles around your wreath.

You’ve done it! Your Advent wreath is ready for its blessing.

How it Works

The tradition of your Advent wreath is really very simple.

First, on the Saturday before Advent starts, gather your family for the Blessing of the Wreath.

Then, every day of Advent, when you and your family get together for dinner, you will light the candles for that week and say the week’s prayer.

You can keep the candles burning while you eat dinner, and then blow them out.

Bless Your Advent Wreath

Time to bless your Advent wreath! Gather everyone together. Ask one person to read this blessing aloud:

O God, by whose word
all things are sanctified,
pour forth Your blessing
upon this wreath,
and grant that we who use it
may prepare our hearts
for the coming of Christ
and may receive from You
abundant graces.
Through Christ our Lord,
Amen.

After this blessing, have everyone join together in praying aloud the Our Father.

First Sunday of Advent

Light the first purple candle. This candle stands for HOPE. It is called the Prophet's candle. When we look at this candle, we want to be reminded that Jesus is coming very soon.

Each night this week, you can light the candle and say the prayer for this first week of Advent. After you pray, leave the candle burning until after you finish your dinner.

First Week of Advent Prayer

All-powerful God,
increase our strength of will
for doing good,
that Christ may find
an eager welcome at His coming
and call us to His side
in the Kingdom of heaven,
where he lives and reigns
with You and the Holy Spirit
one God, forever and ever.
Amen.

Second Sunday of Advent

Light two purple candles. The second purple candle stands for FAITH and is called the Bethlehem candle. When we look at this candle, we are reminded of the long journey Mary and Joseph took to Bethlehem.

Each night this week, you can light two purple candles and say the prayer for the second week of Advent. After you pray, leave the candles burning until after you finish your dinner.

Second Week of Advent Prayer

God of power and mercy
open our hearts in welcome.
Remove the things that hinder us
from receiving Christ with joy,
so that we may share
His wisdom and become one
with Him when He comes in glory,
for He lives and reigns
with You and the Holy Spirit,
one God, forever and ever.
Amen.

Third Sunday of Advent

Light the two purple candles and the pink candle. The pink candle means JOY. It is called the Shepherd's candle. When we look at this candle, we are reminded of the great joy the world felt when Jesus was born.

Each night this week, you can light two purple candles and the pink candle. Say the prayer for the third week of Advent. After you pray, leave the candles burning until after you finish your dinner.

Third Week of Advent Prayer

Lord God,
may we, Your people,
who look forward to
the birthday of Christ,
experience the joy of salvation
and celebrate that feast
with love and thanksgiving.
We ask this
through Christ our Lord,
Amen.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

This week you can light all four candles! The last purple candle stands for PEACE. It is called the Angel's candle. When we look at this candle, we are reminded of the message of the angels: "Peace on earth, good will toward men."

Each night this week, you can light all four of the candles. Say the prayer for the fourth week of Advent. After your pray, leave the candles burning until after you finish your dinner.

Fourth Week of Advent Prayer

Father, all-powerful God,
Your eternal Word, took flesh
on our earth when
the Virgin Mary placed her life
at the service of Your plan.
Lift our minds in watchful hope
to hear the voice
which announces His glory,
and open our minds
to receive the Spirit
who prepares us for His coming.
We ask this through Christ our Lord,
Amen.

Additional days you might celebrate

Saint Nicholas – Feast Day December 6

Saint Nicholas was a bishop who was famous for giving to the poor and protecting the wronged. He is the patron saint of children, sailors, and prisoners.

Today is his feast day. In lots of countries, children leave their shoes outside their door overnight so that Saint Nicholas can fill them with little treats while they sleep. This is loads of fun to do!

Talk to your parents. See if this is a tradition you might like to try this year. YOU could even leave a little treat in your parents' shoes!

Our Lady of Guadalupe – Feast Day December 12

We know Mary, the mother of Jesus, by many names. One is Our Lady of Guadalupe. She first appeared to a man named Juan Diego in Mexico long ago. She told him to ask the bishop to build a shrine in her honor. The bishop didn't believe Juan Diego, so Our Lady appeared again on December 12th. It was winter, but she made many roses bloom! Juan Diego took them to the bishop as a sign. When he opened his cloak to show the bishop the roses, there was a picture of Mary printed on the cloak. Now, the bishop believed Juan Diego!

Draw Our Lady of Guadalupe. Make her colorful! Hang your picture in your room to remind you to pray the Hail Mary.