

Praying and living the Advent season

An Advent wreath can help you and your household focus on waiting for Christ. Create a wreath from evergreen boughs and four candles (three purple and one rose or white for the joyful third week). Use the following format each week.

INVITATION TO PRAYER *As you light the candles (one for each week of Advent), invite all to share in the response.*

Leader: We look for light, and lo, darkness;
for brightness, but we walk in gloom! (*Isaiah 59:9*)

All: You, Lord, give light to my lamp;
you brighten the darkness about me. (*Psalms 18:28*)

SCRIPTURE READING *When the candles are lit, read aloud one of the Scripture readings from the day or Sunday. Either reflect quietly or invite each household member to respond to these questions:*

- How do I want Jesus to be my light this Advent (tonight)?
- How do the words of this reading help me to wait for Jesus to come?

CLOSING PRAYER (*adapted from Ephesians 5:1-2, 8-14*)

O God of light, help us be imitators of you and live in love.
For we were once darkness, but now we are light in the Lord.
Help us live as children of light,
for light produces every kind of goodness and truth.
Help us learn what is pleasing to the Lord.
We want to take no part in the works of darkness
but rather to expose them.
Christ will give us light! Amen.

November 28



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Getting ready!

Now Advent begins, when we wait with eager anticipation to celebrate the birth of the Christ child. With his birth, Jesus brings the promise of salvation and peace. He is the righteous Branch sprung up for David, as foretold by Jeremiah. It is a glorious moment of great joy!

The birth of Jesus is also a sign: he is born poor and vulnerable in a stable among the lowliest of animals. His coming is first welcomed by shepherds, outcasts of the community, yet heralded by angels because his birth brings redemption and new life. His birth is a lesson for us: we are to live our lives in humility, trusting in the Lord. As the psalmist says, “He guides

the humble in righteousness, and teaches the humble his way” (Psalm 25:9).

Advent prompts us to prepare for Christ’s coming by examining how we are living our life in light of the gospel and how well our actions reflect our response to Christ. Paul says we must “abound in love for one another,” especially the most vulnerable in our community. Advent also calls us to look ahead to the parousia, Christ’s glorious return at the end time. As Luke reminds us, we must ever be prepared and ready to meet and greet Christ—to stand before him when he comes.

■ JACK PANOZZO

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (*Cf. Psalm 25 [24]:1-3*)

To you, I lift up my soul, O my God. In you, I have trusted; let me not be put to shame. Nor let my enemies exult over me; and let none who hope in you be put to shame.

INTRODUCTORY RITES (*page 10*)**COLLECT**

Grant your faithful, we pray, almighty God, the resolve to run forth to meet your Christ with righteous deeds at his coming, so that, gathered at his right hand, they may be worthy to possess the heavenly Kingdom. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

FIRST READING (*Jeremiah 33:14-16*)

The days are coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and Judah. In those days, in that time, I will raise up for David a just shoot; he shall do what is right and just in the land. In those days Judah shall be safe and Jerusalem shall dwell secure; this is what they shall call her: "The LORD our justice."

The word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (*Psalm 25:4-5, 8-9, 10, 14*)

r To you, O Lord, I lift my soul.

Your ways, O LORD, make known to me;
 teach me your paths,
 guide me in your truth and teach me,
 for you are God my savior,

and for you I wait all the day. r
 Good and upright is the LORD;
 thus he shows sinners the way.
 He guides the humble to justice,
 and teaches the humble his way. r
 All the paths of the LORD are kindness and constancy
 toward those who keep his covenant and his decrees.
 The friendship of the LORD is with those who fear him,
 and his covenant, for their instruction. r

SECOND READING (1 *Thessalonians* 3:12–4:2)

Brothers and sisters: May the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we have for you, so as to strengthen your hearts, to be blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his holy ones. Amen.

Finally, brothers and sisters, we earnestly ask and exhort you in the Lord Jesus that, as you received from us how you should conduct yourselves to please God—and as you are conducting yourselves—you do so even more. For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus.

The word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

ALLELUIA (*Psalms* 85:8)

Alleluia, alleluia. Show us, Lord, your love; and grant us your salvation. *Alleluia, alleluia.*

GOSPEL (*Luke* 21:25–28, 34–36)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to his disciples: “There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on earth nations will be in dismay,