

## ADVENT WREATH

### Symbols

Circular wreath, signifies eternity and God's unending life.

Evergreens remind us to keep growing in God's love.

The four candles indicate the four weeks of Advent. Three are purple and one is pink.



Purple is symbolic of the Penance and sacrifice we make to prepare for the coming of Jesus. Pink (lit the third week) represents our joy that Christmas is near. If you don't have purple candles, use white ones with purple and pink ribbon! This works well with battery operated tea candles. A white candle is often placed in the center to stand for the Christ Child. It is lit on Christmas day.

### Blessing of the WREATH

O God, bless our Advent wreath and be with us as we prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ. As we light these candles, help us remember to keep our hearts lit with your love. Amen .

**1st Week** - Light the first candle and pray for **HOPE**.

**Lord, we light this first candle in a spirit of hope.**

**Help us to remember that you are always with us.**

**Light up our darkness with hope in your promise to love us always.**

**Amen.**



First Sunday in Advent

**2nd Week** - Light the second candle and pray for **PEACE**

**Lord, we light this second candle in a spirit of peace.**

**Help us to be peacemakers with all the people in our lives.**

**Bless our world with the gift of peace. Amen.**



Second Sunday of Advent

**3rd Week** - Light the third candle and pray for the gift of **JOY**.

**Lord, we light this third candle in a spirit of joy.**

**We rejoice that You have already been born within us.**

**Let us be happy with the simple things in life and bring joy into the lives of others Amen.**



Third Sunday of Advent

**4th Week** - Light the fourth candle and pray for **LOVE**.

**Lord, our hearts desire the warmth of your love.**

**Give us the strength to grow in love so that we can find You in the people, and events of our life. Amen.**



4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

## **MEALTIME PRAYER FOR ADVENT**

with Suggested Daily Activities

**O holy Child of Bethlehem descend to us, we pray  
Cast out our sin and enter in us today  
Bless this meal we share; bless those who are in need.  
O Come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Emmanuel.**

**Briefly share...**

**Sunday:** Something you said or did to act like a follower of Jesus today.

**Monday:** One thing you did today to show love.

**Tuesday:** One way you tried to avoid sin today.

**Wednesday:** One thing you did to make someone happy today.

**Thursday:** How you tried, like Mary, to say "YES" to God today.

**Friday:** How you shared the gift of yourself today with someone.

**Saturday:** Some kind and loving words you spoke to someone today.



## **BLESSING OF CHRISTMAS TREE**

Decide when you can celebrate the beauty of your decorated Christmas tree. Gather around the tree, hold hands with those present and say the following prayer.

*Lord, we stand in wonder as we behold the beauty of this tree. It symbolizes the gifts of life and growth, which you have given to us. We give you thanks for all the gifts you have given to us, especially the gift of our faith and the gift of each other. Bless this tree and bless our family as we come together during the holidays to celebrate your birth. We know that you are the Light of the World and that you want us to let the light of your love shine forth in our lives. Be with us and guide us as we try to be joyful, happy and loving people. Amen.*



## **PRAYERFUL MOMENTS**

Light a candle for a few minutes each day.  
Reflect on the daily Mass Readings (USCCB) and God's message to you.  
Try to put these daily suggestions into practice.



### **Week 1**

1. Come to Mass early. Recall ways you became aware of God's love for you this past week.
2. Pray for each member of your family.
3. Visit, call or pray for someone you know who lives alone.
4. Really listen to each person who speaks to you today.
5. Rejoice in God's love for you and ways in which someone shares love with you.
6. Pray for love and unity in our world and country.
7. Fast and pray for those who live in war-torn countries.

### **Week 2**

1. Go to Mass and receive the gift of the Eucharist with love and gratitude.
2. Smile at six people today.
3. Share some of your time with someone today. Be present and listen to that person.
4. Try to overcome a fault you have which causes friction in your family or at work.
5. Invite someone you don't know very well to share lunch with you.
6. Pray for those struggling with their faith.
7. Observe someone who needs help and assist them.

### **Week 3**

1. When you come to Mass, look around and appreciate the gift of your parish faith community.
2. Pray for all who will be alone for the first time this Christmas.
3. Pray for the gift of generosity and ways you share it with others.
4. Reach out to those who are important in your life and tell them you love them.
5. Pray for your friends...and enemies.
6. Pray about what makes you unhappy.
7. Spend some quiet time reflecting on the ways you reveal the love of Jesus to others.

### **Week 4**

1. Reflect on the importance of attending Mass receiving the Eucharist in your life.
2. Pray for those who are alone, sad or afraid.
3. Thank God for your family, friends and co-workers.
4. Pray, go to Confession, and resolve to become a peacemaker.
5. Help with a chore in your home that you usually try to avoid.
6. Pray for those who are disabled.
7. Look around and listen; think of the real meaning of Christmas.

## MESSAGES FROM THE CHRISTMAS STORY

As you display the figures in the manger scene in your home, take some time to share with each other the story of each the piece and how it can relate to your own life story.

### STABLE & MANGER

There was no place in the town for Joseph and Mary to stay.  
Make room in your heart and home for Him.

**When did you welcome someone because of Jesus' love in your heart?**



### MARY

She said "yes" when she was asked to become the Mother of the Savior.

**When were some times that you said "yes" and let God take charge of your life?**



### JOSEPH

Joseph didn't always understand what God wanted of him. But he trusted God and was faithful.

**When have you been confused about what to do?**



### ANIMALS

They kept Jesus warm with their breath.

**How do people take care of you?**



### JESUS

He is our Savior who came into our world as a tiny infant because He loved us so much

**In what ways does Jesus come to us today?**



### ANGELS

They are "messengers" who came to bring the Good news of Jesus birth to the Shepherds.

**Who are some of God's messengers today? What "good news" do they bring you?**



### SHEPHERDS



The shepherds were poor people just doing their job. They were the first to find Jesus and worship Him. They also remind us to stop what we're doing and find time to praise God at Mass.

**In what ways do you take time to find Jesus in your busy life?**

### MAGI

The kings came from foreign lands and followed the star to find Jesus.

They searched until they found Him.

**What obstacles do you have to overcome in order to discover Jesus?**

