



# THE ADVENT WREATH

FOUR SERVICES FOR HOME AND FAMILY



A SIMPLE CEREMONY OF LIGHTING THE CANDLES OF THE ADVENT WREATH  
AND WELCOMING THE BIRTH OF CHRIST: THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD



Placing four candles on green fronds has become a symbol of Advent in many Christian homes, especially in the Germanic countries and in North America.

*The Advent wreath, with the progressive lighting of its four candles, Sunday after Sunday, until the Solemnity of Christmas, is a recollection of the various stages of salvation history prior to Christ's coming, and a symbol of the prophetic light gradually illuminating the long night prior to the rising of the Sun of justice. (See: Malachi 3:20; Luke 1:78).*

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The wreath can be the focal point in the home during the journey of Advent; the lighting of the candles being part of the family meal.

The colour of the candles is not the main issue, and of course be sure that your Advent wreath is not a fire risk or danger to you or your home.

Each member of the household can have a part to read and share in these four services.

## FIRST SUNDAY / SATURDAY EVENING

Gather around the Advent wreath, which currently has no candles lit.

Together, make the sign of the cross, saying:

In the name of the + Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Leader:** Our help is in the name of the Lord.

**All:** Who made heaven and earth.

**Leader:** Let us praise God,

**All:** Who enlightens every heart, now and forever.

### INTRODUCING THE CELEBRATION:

**Leader:**

At this time of the year, we know of short days and long nights,  
and each day we look forward more and more to the coming of light.

During Advent, we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in glory and  
the celebration of our Saviour's birth.

Today we pray that God's blessing, in the sign of this wreath will keep us watchful in  
prayer. May it make us witnesses to Jesus, the Lord of light and love who has taken our  
human flesh to bring the Father's love to all people.

### BIBLE READING:

**Leader:**

Let us listen to the God who speaks to us in Scripture.

Let us remember the long period of expectation that preceded Jesus' birth.

We know that God sustained Israel's hope in the coming of the Messiah through the  
prophets.

**Reader:**

Be patient, therefore brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for  
the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late  
rains. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do  
not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the  
Judge is standing at the door. As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the  
prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

**James 5:7-10 (ESV/CE)**



## **THE LIGHTING OF THE FIRST CANDLE:**

While one member of the household reads this prayer, another member may light the first candle:

O God,  
as light comes from this candle,  
may the blessing of Jesus Christ come to us,  
warming our hearts, brightening our way  
and reflecting the splendour of Christ.  
May Christ our Saviour bring life into the  
darkness of this world,  
and to us, as we wait for his coming.

**All:** Amen.

## **PRAYER OF PRAISE:**

Jesus, Light from eternal Light,	℞. Praise and glory to you
Jesus, radiant Morning Star,	℞. Praise and glory to you
Jesus, dawn of the new humanity,	℞. Praise and glory to you
Jesus, day without sunset,	℞. Praise and glory to you

## **INTERCESSIONS:**

**Leader:** Gathered as we are in prayer, let us ask the Lord to bless us with hope and peace.

**All:** ℞. Come, Lord, Jesus come.

## **Different members of the household may announce the intentions:**

Lord Jesus, light of the world:  
Come and fill our hearts with the light of your love. ℞.

Lord Jesus, Wonderful Counsellor:  
Come with the gift of your spirit of wisdom. ℞.

Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace:  
Come and teach us with the power of forgiveness. ℞.

Lord Jesus, Divine Physician:  
Come with your healing of bodies, minds and spirits. ℞.

Lord Jesus, Way to the Father:  
Come and accompany us on the journey of life. ℞.

Lord Jesus, Life of the world:  
Come and be with us in our prayer. ℞.

Lord Jesus, Good News of Salvation:  
Come and make us joyful in faith and hope. ℞.

Lord Jesus, Joy of the World:  
Come and inspire us with a love and service to all people. ℞.

Lord Jesus, saving Word of the father:  
Come to us with the power of your mercy. R̄.

Lord Jesus, Saviour of the World:  
Come with your compassion for the suffering and forsaken. R̄.

**Leader:**

God of hope and love,  
we praise you for sending Jesus, your Son  
to save us from our sins  
and to be the light in our darkness.  
Bless us as we gather in his name,  
and bless this wreath as a sign of your unending love  
and of Jesus' presence among us.  
Keep us watchful in prayer  
as we await this through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
in eternal glory, God for ever and ever.

**All:** Amen.

**CONCLUSION:**

**Leader:**

May the light of Christ coming into the world in glory,  
overcome the darkness of sin and sorrow,  
and give us the joy and the peace of a lively faith.

**All:** Amen.



## SECOND SUNDAY / SATURDAY EVENING

Gather around the Advent wreath, which already has one candle lit.

Together, make the sign of the cross, saying:

In the name of the + Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Leader:** Our help is in the name of the Lord.

**All:** Who made heaven and earth.

**Leader:** Let us praise God,

**All:** Who enlightens every heart, now and forever.

### INTRODUCING THE CELEBRATION:

**Leader:**

At this time of the year, we know of short days and long nights,  
and each day we look forward more and more to the coming of light.

During Advent, we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in glory and  
the celebration of our Saviour's birth.

Today we pray that God's blessing, in the sign of this wreath will keep us watchful in  
prayer. May it make us witnesses to Jesus, the Lord of light and love who has taken our  
human flesh to bring the Father's love to all people.

### BIBLE READING:

**Leader:**

Let us listen to the God who speaks to us in Scripture.

Let us remember the reality of grace in the world, that through this grace we will reach our  
fullness in Christ. We shall become like him and see him as he really is, just as he has  
promised us through faith.

**Reader:**

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in  
Christ Jesus, that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge  
– even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you – so that you are not  
lacking in any gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ... God is faithful,  
by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**1 Corinthians 1:3-7, 9 (ESV/CE)**



## **THE LIGHTING OF THE SECOND CANDLE:**

While one member of the household reads this prayer, another member may light the second candle:

O God,  
as light comes from this candle,  
may the blessing of Jesus Christ come to us,  
warming our hearts, brightening our way  
and reflecting the splendour of Christ.  
May Christ our Saviour bring life into the  
darkness of this world,  
and to us, as we wait for his coming.

**All:** Amen.

## **PRAYER OF PRAISE:**

Jesus, Light from eternal Light,      *R.* Praise and glory to you  
Jesus, radiant Morning Star,      *R.* Praise and glory to you  
Jesus, dawn of the new humanity,      *R.* Praise and glory to you  
Jesus, day without sunset,      *R.* Praise and glory to you

## **INTERCESSIONS:**

**Leader:** Gathered as we are in prayer, let us ask the Lord to bless us with hope and peace.

**All:** *R.* Come, Lord, Jesus come.

## **Different members of the household may announce the intentions:**

Lord Jesus, light of the world:  
Come and fill our hearts with the light of your love. *R.*

Lord Jesus, Wonderful Counsellor:  
Come with the gift of your spirit of wisdom. *R.*

Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace:  
Come and teach us with the power of forgiveness. *R.*

Lord Jesus, Divine Physician:  
Come with your healing of bodies, minds and spirits. *R.*

Lord Jesus, Way to the Father:  
Come and accompany us on the journey of life. *R.*

Lord Jesus, Life of the world:  
Come and be with us in our prayer. *R.*

Lord Jesus, Good News of Salvation:  
Come and make us joyful in faith and hope. *R.*

Lord Jesus, Joy of the World:  
Come and inspire us with a love and service to all people. *R.*

Lord Jesus, saving Word of the father:  
Come to us with the power of your mercy. *℞.*

Lord Jesus, Saviour of the World:  
Come with your compassion for the suffering and forsaken. *℞.*

**Leader:**

God of light and hope,  
look upon us in love,  
and fill us with the Spirit of Jesus  
that we may love and serve you in your kingdom.  
Protect our family and all people during this week  
and keep us watchful in prayer  
as we await the coming of our Lord, Jesus Christ,  
who is the light of the world,  
and lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.

**All:** Amen

**CONCLUSION:**

**Leader:**

May the light of Christ coming into the world in glory,  
overcome the darkness of sin and sorrow,  
and give us the joy and the peace of a lively faith.

**All:** Amen.



## THIRD SUNDAY / SATURDAY EVENING

Gather around the Advent wreath, which already has two candles lit.

Together, make the sign of the cross, saying:

In the name of the + Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Leader:** Our help is in the name of the Lord.

**All:** Who made heaven and earth.

**Leader:** Let us praise God,

**All:** Who enlightens every heart, now and forever.

### INTRODUCING THE CELEBRATION:

**Leader:**

At this time of the year, we know of short days and long nights, and each day we look forward more and more to the coming of light.

During Advent, we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in glory and the celebration of our Saviour's birth.

Today we pray that God's blessing, in the sign of this wreath will keep us watchful in prayer. May it make us witnesses to Jesus, the Lord of light and love who has taken our human flesh to bring the Father's love to all people.

### BIBLE READING:

**Leader:**

Let us listen to the God who speaks to us in Scripture. Let us remember that Advent is a time of conversion and new beginnings. No matter how far we stray, the Holy Spirit will guide us anew, as we welcome the Christ-child with eager hearts.

**Reader:**

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in Isaiah the prophet. "Behold, I send my messenger before your face who will prepare your way, the voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'"

John appeared baptising in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptised by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie.

I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit."

**Mark 1:1-8 ESV/CE**





### **THE LIGHTING OF THE THIRD CANDLE:**

While one member of the household reads this prayer, another member may light the third candle:

O God,  
as light comes from this candle,  
may the blessing of Jesus Christ come to us,  
warming our hearts, brightening our way  
and reflecting the splendour of Christ.  
May Christ our Saviour bring life into the  
darkness of this world,  
and to us, as we wait for his coming.

**All:** Amen.

### **PRAYER OF PRAISE:**

Jesus, Light from eternal Light,      *R.* Praise and glory to you  
Jesus, radiant Morning Star,      *R.* Praise and glory to you  
Jesus, dawn of the new humanity,      *R.* Praise and glory to you  
Jesus, day without sunset,      *R.* Praise and glory to you

### **INTERCESSIONS:**

**Leader:** Gathered as we are in prayer, let us ask the Lord to bless us with hope and peace.

**All:** *R.* Come, Lord, Jesus come.

### **Different members of the household may announce the intentions:**

Lord Jesus, light of the world:  
Come and fill our hearts with the light of your love. *R.*

Lord Jesus, Wonderful Counsellor:  
Come with the gift of your spirit of wisdom. *R.*

Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace:  
Come and teach us with the power of forgiveness. *R.*

Lord Jesus, Divine Physician:  
Come with your healing of bodies, minds and spirits. *R.*

Lord Jesus, Way to the Father:  
Come and accompany us on the journey of life. *R.*

Lord Jesus, Life of the world:  
Come and be with us in our prayer. *R.*

Lord Jesus, Good News of Salvation:  
Come and make us joyful in faith and hope. *R.*

Lord Jesus, Joy of the World:  
Come and inspire us with a love and service to all people. *R.*

Lord Jesus, saving Word of the father:  
Come to us with the power of your mercy. *℟.*

Lord Jesus, Saviour of the World:  
Come with your compassion for the suffering and forsaken. *℟.*

**Leader:**

Almighty God, strengthen the resolve of your faithful people to prepare for the coming of your Christ by works of justice and mercy, so that when we go forth to meet him, he may call us to take our places and sit in the kingdom of heaven.

We ask this 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.

**All:** Amen.

**CONCLUSION:**

**Leader:**

May the light of Christ coming into the world in glory, overcome the darkness of sin and sorrow, and give us the joy and the peace of a lively faith.

**All:** Amen.



## FOURTH SUNDAY / SATURDAY EVENING

Gather around the Advent wreath, which already has three candles lit.

Together, make the sign of the cross, saying:

In the name of the + Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Leader:** Our help is in the name of the Lord.

**All:** Who made heaven and earth.

**Leader:** Let us praise God,

**All:** Who enlightens every heart, now and forever.

### INTRODUCING THE CELEBRATION:

**Leader:**

At this time of the year, we know of short days and long nights, and each day we look forward more and more to the coming of light.

During Advent, we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in glory and the celebration of our Saviour's birth.

Today we pray that God's blessing, in the sign of this wreath will keep us watchful in prayer, and make us witnesses to Jesus, the Lord of light and love who has taken our human flesh to bring the Father's love to all people.

### BIBLE READING:

**Leader:**

Let us listen to the God who speaks to us in Scripture.

Let us remember this joyful hope that the salvation already accomplished by Christ has been born again this year. And we await his glorious second coming as Lord of History and universal Judge.

**Reader:**

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.

Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things ... practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

**Philippians 4:4-8, 9b (ESV/CE)**



## **THE LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH CANDLE:**

While one member of the household reads this prayer, another member may light the fourth candle:

O God,  
as light comes from this candle,  
may the blessing of Jesus Christ come to us,  
warming our hearts, brightening our way  
and reflecting the splendour of Christ.  
May Christ our Saviour bring life into the  
darkness of this world,  
and to us, as we wait for his coming.

**All:** Amen.

## **PRAYER OF PRAISE:**

Jesus, Light from eternal Light,      *R.* Praise and glory to you  
Jesus, radiant Morning Star,      *R.* Praise and glory to you  
Jesus, dawn of the new humanity,      *R.* Praise and glory to you  
Jesus, day without sunset,      *R.* Praise and glory to you

## **INTERCESSIONS:**

**Leader:** Gathered as we are in prayer, let us ask the Lord to bless us with hope and peace.

**All:** *R.* Come, Lord, Jesus come.

## **Different members of the household may announce the intentions:**

Lord Jesus, light of the world:  
Come and fill our hearts with the light of your love. *R.*

Lord Jesus, Wonderful Counsellor:  
Come with the gift of your spirit of wisdom. *R.*

Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace:  
Come and teach us with the power of forgiveness. *R.*

Lord Jesus, Divine Physician:  
Come with your healing of bodies, minds and spirits. *R.*

Lord Jesus, Way to the Father:  
Come and accompany us on the journey of life. *R.*

Lord Jesus, Life of the world:  
Come and be with us in our prayer. *R.*

Lord Jesus, Good News of Salvation:  
Come and make us joyful in faith and hope. *R.*

Lord Jesus, Joy of the World:  
Come and inspire us with a love and service to all people. *R.*

Lord Jesus, saving Word of the father:  
Come to us with the power of your mercy. R̄.

Lord Jesus, Saviour of the World:  
Come with your compassion for the suffering and forsaken. R̄.

**Leader:**

Lord our God,  
We praise you for your Son, Jesus Christ:  
he is Emmanuel, the hope of the peoples,  
he is the wisdom that teaches and guides us,  
he is the Saviour of every nation.  
Lord God, we ask for your blessings on our family  
as we light the candles of this wreath.  
May the wreath and its light  
be a sign of Christ's promise to bring salvation.  
May he come quickly and not delay.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

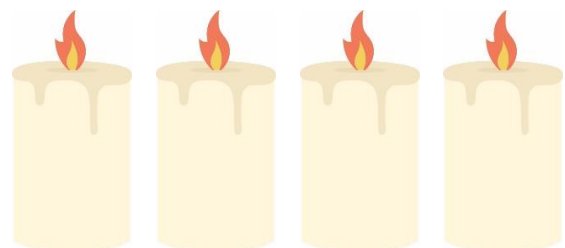
**All:** Amen.

**CONCLUSION:**

**Leader:**

May the light of Christ coming into the world in glory,  
overcome the darkness of sin and sorrow,  
and give us the joy and the peace of a lively faith.

**All:** Amen.



## ARE WE READY FOR JESUS TO BE BORN?

Are we ready to receive and welcome Jesus whenever he comes, however he comes? In this focus on past, present and future, Advent symbolises both our individual journey and our collective journey as the Catholic Church. We live in the in-between period of our salvation - between the two comings, and this is at the heart of the tension of Advent. We wait in expectation since Christ, risen from the dead and now present among us in mystery, will be revealed to everyone on the Last Day as the glorious Son of our heavenly Father.

As Catholics we affirm that Christ is truly present in the world today. This recognition and faith that we share with those who went before us, in our Lord's revelation, provides a clear basis for holy living. Emerging from a deep sense that we live between the times, in the middle times and in changing times, Christ is our one anchor. So with the Church during this season, we celebrate God's incarnation, we hold onto our hope in his future kingdom and know that one day we really will meet him in glory.

## PRAYER

God of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany,  
you have given us many signs and prophecies  
about your Son Jesus Christ's birth,  
and they have been fulfilled.

May we see from the past to the present,  
the present into the future,  
that your loving hand guides all things.  
Your glory is forever within our reach.  
Amen.



## THE YEAR OF MARK

Mark, whose Gospel account of the life and teaching of Jesus we hear and celebrate in our Masses this year, never speaks of Jesus as the light, nor picks up the Old Testament imagery of the God of Israel as giving light, or being in light, or of being light.

The ultimate purpose and theme of Mark is to present and defend Jesus' universal call to discipleship. Mark's principle concern is to narrate the identity and teaching of Jesus, thus discipleship is essentially about a relationship with Jesus, rather than the following of a certain code of conduct.

At the heart of the disciple's life is trusting Jesus, confessing Jesus, taking note of how he lives his life, following his teaching and ultimately being prepared to face the kind of rejection Jesus himself faced.

### *Acknowledgements:*

Scripture readings have been taken from the English Standard version Catholic Edition (RSV/CE) ©2017 Crossway

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