

Advent

The Meaning of Advent:

We are a people of Hope to whom God has made a solemn promise. During Advent, we read in the Bible about God's promise to send a great Light in the darkness, to give sight to the blind, to fill us with hope, peace, joy, and love.

We believe that God's promise was fulfilled in the birth of his Son, Jesus, born of Mary in Bethlehem. We believe that Christ is a Light for the world.

Advent is a time of quiet, joyful preparation for the celebration of Jesus' birth and also a time to remember that we wait for Christ to come again at the end of time.

The first Sunday of Advent is also a time of new beginnings- it is the official start of the Church's calendar.



Preparing to Celebrate Advent in the Classroom:

Take time to explain to the students about the season of Advent. Explain that Advent has a new colour, **purple**. Change the color of your Prayer Table cloth to purple with your students. Place an Advent Wreath on your prayer table with 3 purple and 1 pink candle.

The Advent wreath is circular and made of evergreen branches. It contains four candles, 3 purple and 1 pink. Its circular shape reminds us that God's love for us has no beginning and no end. The evergreen branches remind that God's love is eternal. The four candles represent each of the four Sundays of Advent. The third candle is pink and it is lit on Gaudete (Gow-DAY-tay) Sunday, the third week of Advent, in which we celebrate the joy of waiting for the Lord's coming. Sometimes, the priest will wear rose colour chasuble at mass.

Here is a **prayer** to use before lighting the **Advent wreath**:

"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light" (Isaiah 9:2a)

Lord God, you promise to send us joy beyond all telling. Let your blessing come upon us as we wait for your promised Light to dispel the darkness of our minds and hearts. Send your peace into the world, may the fire of your love fill our hearts and make us one with you and with each other. We ask this through the Great Light, Jesus Christ, who enlightens and encourages us always. Amen

N.B. Please consider saving your celebration of Christmas until true Christmas time, when you return to school in January. The time of Advent is wonderful gift that offers us an opportunity to grow in beautiful virtue of Hope. (*Children's Daily Prayer, p114-115*)

Sacred Music: Please ensure that music that is sung during the Advent Season is for Advent. It is not yet Christmas. Please refrain from singing Christmas songs until after Christmas has come. Please refer to the attached *Born of the Spirit* Advent Celebrations which include music from the programs. You can also refer to the CBW for Advent music.