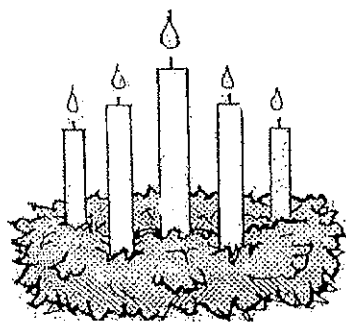


The Tradition of the Advent Wreath at Home



One of the ways to celebrate the coming of Jesus, the Light of the World, is to use an Advent wreath between Sunday, December 1 and Christmas. An Advent wreath provides a Christian focal point at home, marking the Sundays in Advent. It helps pull our attention away from the busyness of the pre-holiday season and helps us to focus on Christ and his entry into the world in human form at Christmas.

To make an Advent wreath, start with a circular wreath of evergreens and five candles: three purple, one pink and one white. The evergreens which form the wreath represent life growth and hope even in the cold of winter. Jesus came *that they may have life and have it abundantly* (Jn. 10:10b). The circle represents the unending love of God and the eternity and unity of the Trinity. *For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son* (John 3:16). The candles represent Jesus who said, *I am the light of the world* (John 8:12). The light grows brighter each Sunday of Advent as each new candle is lit in anticipation of the Incarnation of God. The three purple candles represent the royalty of Christ and our penitential attitude as we await His return to earth in glory. The pink candle, for the third Sunday of Advent, shows the joy we have that God came as our Savior and will return as our King. The white candle is lit on Christmas Day to celebrate the birth of our Savior and King.

A Prayer for Blessing Your Advent Wreath

Lord God, by whose word all things are sanctified, pour forth your blessing upon this wreath. Grant that we who use it may prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus as Savior and King. Help us to watch in expectation and empower us to praise you with our lives, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The First Sunday of Advent

Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Second Sunday of Advent

Merciful God, who sent thy messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Third Sunday of Advent

Stir up thy power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let thy bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

We beseech thee, Almighty God, to purify our consciences by thy daily visitation, that when thy Son our Lord cometh he may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Christmas Day

O God, you make us glad by the yearly festival of the birth of your only Son Jesus Christ: Grant that we, who joyfully receive him as our Redeemer, may with sure confidence behold him when he comes to be our Judge; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.