

The Advent wreath is a beautiful tradition with lots of meaning behind it. Use this time as a family to deepen your understanding and appreciation of the Advent season. Make lighting the Advent Wreath a time for meaningful connections and discussions with your loved ones. These prayers add a touch of spirituality and help you all reflect on the season in a more profound way.

Start with the Advent Wreath Blessing

See USCCB Blessing of an Advent.

The First Week of Advent: December 1, 2024

Candle Name: The Prophecy Candle, Purple

The First Week of Advent Represents: Hope

Purple is the primary color associated with Advent. Within the Catholic Church it symbolizes penance, preparation, and sacrifice. During the first week of Advent, we remember the Old Testament prophets who foretold of Jesus' coming with hope and anticipation.

Leader: Our HOPE is in the coming of the Lord.

All: May his love shine in our hearts.

**Light the first purple candle of HOPE. During the rest of the week this candle is lit at evening meals or when the family gathers and the first week of advent prayers are said.*

Scripture Reflection

Leader: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined." Isaiah 9:2

**Pause for silent prayer.*

Leader: Dear Jesus, you are the hope in our messy world. This Advent, help us slow down, listen to your voice, and focus on what's really important. We place our hope in you as we prepare our hearts to celebrate your birth on Christmas.

All: Amen.

The Second Week of Advent: December 8, 2024

Candle Name: the Bethlehem Candle, Purple

The Second Week of Advent Represents: Faith

During this second week of Advent, we reflect on our lives and work on becoming better-versions-of-ourselves in preparation for Jesus' coming. We remember the journey Joseph and Mary took from Nazareth to Bethlehem.

Leader: The Lord is our faith and our life.

All: May his love shine in our hearts.

**Light the first purple candle for HOPE and the second purple candle for FAITH.*

Scripture Reflection:

Leader: "And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to be delivered. And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn." Luke 2:4-7

**Pause for silent prayer.*

Leader: Dear Jesus, strengthen our faith and lead us on the way to you like the wise men who left their home in darkness to seek you out and like Mary and Joseph who left their home to do the will of God. Help us also, to bring our gifts to you and to be obedient to your will as a sign of our deep love for you. Let your love transform every aspect of our lives and touch everyone we encounter. Increase our faith in you, Jesus.

All: Amen.

The Third Week of Advent: December 15, 2024

Candle Name: The Shepherd's Candle, Rose

The Third Week of Advent Represents: Joy

This third candle is rose and symbolizes rejoicing. During the third week of Advent, we are filled with joy for the near arrival of Jesus on Christmas day. This Sunday is often called "Gaudete Sunday" as we reflect on the joy the shepherd's felt at the birth of Jesus.

Leader: May the Lord's JOY be with us all.

All: May his love shine in our hearts.

Add the "O" Antiphons of Advent 12/17- 12/23

**Light the first and second purple candles for HOPE and FAITH and the rose candle for JOY.*

Scripture Reflection:

Leader: "And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them." Luke 2:20

**Pause for silent prayer.*

Leader: Dear Jesus, help us focus on you during this busy season. May we stay aware of the joy you bring into our lives. We want to find you in the everyday moments and come with hearts of gratitude to your manger on Christmas.

All: Amen.

The Fourth Week of Advent: December 22, 2024

Candle Name: The Angel's Candle, purple

The Fourth Week of Advent Represents: Peace and Preparation

During this final week of Advent, we remember the message of the Angels. "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on Earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

Leader: May the Lord's Peace be with us all.

All: May his love shine in our hearts.

**Light the first and second purple candles for HOPE and FAITH, the rose candle for JOY, and the third purple candle for PEACE.*

Scripture Reflection:

Leader: "And the angel said to them, "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:10-11

*Pause for silent prayer.

Leader: Dear Jesus, you entered our world on Christmas as the Prince of Peace. This Advent, as we strive to become the-best-version-of-ourselves, fill us with a deep and abiding peace. As Christmas draws closer, help us share that peace with everyone we encounter, especially those who need it most.

All: Amen.

Christmas Day: December 25

Candle Name: Christ's Candle, white

On Christmas day we light the white candle that is in the center of the Advent wreath. White symbolizes the purity of Christ, our sinless, spotless, pure Savior. Those who receive Christ as Savior are washed of their sins and made whiter than snow.

Leader: "To you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord." Luke 2:11

**Light the first and second purple candles for HOPE and FAITH, the rose candle for JOY, the third purple candle for PEACE, and the White Candle for CHRIST.*

Leader: Let us give thanks for God's indescribable gift of Jesus and our hope for eternal salvation through faith in him.

Pause for silent prayer.

Leader: Lord, help us to be ever aware of your mercy, grace, and love. And guide us to an understanding of your will.

All: Amen.

The "O" Antiphons of Advent

The Roman Church has been singing the "O" Antiphons since at least the eighth century. They are the antiphons that accompany the Magnificat canticle of Evening Prayer (Vespers) in the Divine Office of the last week in Advent from December 17-23. They are a magnificent theology that uses ancient biblical imagery drawn from the messianic hopes of the Old Testament to proclaim the coming of Christ as the fulfillment not only of Old Testament hopes, but present ones as well. Their repeated use of the imperative "Come!" embodies the longing of all for the Divine Messiah.

There are seven "O Antiphons," one for each of the vesper service and antiphon begins with "O" and a title for the coming Christ, concluding with a petition related to that image. The following "O Antiphons" are identified by the Latin incipit, and Scripture references.

The antiphon set's traditional arrangement forms an acrostic, with the first letters of the Latin text spelling SARCORE. When read in reverse order, it spells the Latin phrase ERO CRAS, meaning "I come tomorrow" or "I shall be (with you) tomorrow," thus revealing the embedded message the night before Christmas Eve. Notice the antiphon associated with stanza 1 of the modern hymn appears last in the "Os" order. By the time the hymn appears in English-language hymnals, the final antiphon appears as the first stanza.

December 17th

Leader: Come, **O Wisdom** (Sapientia) of our God Most High, guiding creation with power and love: come to teach us the path of knowledge! (Isaiah 11:2-3; 28:29)

All: Come Lord Jesus!

December 18th

Leader: Come, **O Leader of the House of Israel** (Adonai), giver of the Law to Moses on Sinai: come to rescue us with your mighty power! (Isaiah 11:4-5; 33:22)

All: Come Lord Jesus!

December 19th

Leader: Come, **O Root of Jesse's stem** (Radix Jesse), sign of God's love for all his people: come to save us without delay! (Isaiah 11:1,10; Isaiah 52:15; Romans 15:11)

All: Come Lord Jesus!

December 20th

Leader: Come, **O Key of David** (O Clavis Davidica), opening the gates of God's eternal Kingdom: come and free the prisoners of darkness! (Isaiah 9:6; 22:22; Revelation 3:7)

All: Come Lord Jesus!

December 21st

Leader: Come, **O Radiant Dawn** (O Oriens), splendor of eternal light, sun of justice: come and shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death. (Isaiah 9:1; 58:8; 60:18-20; Malachi 4:2; John 8:12)

All: Come Lord Jesus!

December 22nd

Leader: **O King of all nations** (Rex Gentium) and keystone of the Church: come and save man, whom you formed from the dust! (Isaiah 2:4; 9:5; Daniel 7:14; Ephesians 2:20)

All: Come Lord Jesus!

December 23rd

Leader: Come, **O Emmanuel**, our King and Giver of Law: come to save us, Lord our God! (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23),

All: Come Lord Jesus!