

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT Year C



Lighting of the Advent Wreath & Penitential Rite

The Priest reverences the altar and comes and stands in front of the Advent Wreath

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

This is what we have heard from God and are declaring to you: God is light, and there is no darkness in him at all. If we say that we share in God's life while we are living in darkness, we are lying, because we are not living the truth. But if we live in light, as he is in light, we have a share in one another's life, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin.

We bless this Advent Wreath - a reminder of life in the depth of winter, a reminder of life in the midst of death.

The Priest blesses the wreath with Holy water and Incense.

We light this first candle - a reminder of the presence of Christ in the world

The Priest (or a member of the congregation) lights the first purple candle.

If we say we have no sin we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us; if we acknowledge our sins, he is trustworthy and upright, so that he will forgive our sins and cleanse us of all evil. (1 John. 1:5-9)

So let us freely confess our sin (*Pause*)

Lord Jesus, you are the light of the world.
Lord, have mercy. **Lord have mercy**
You call us to walk in the light of your truth.
Christ, have mercy. **Christ have mercy**
You call us to stand ready for your coming to us.
Lord, have mercy. **Lord have mercy**

May Almighty...

There is no Gloria during Advent

FIRST READING A reading from the prophet Jeremiah (33:14-16)

See, the days are coming – it is the Lord who speaks – when I am going to fulfil the promise I made to the House of Israel and the House of Judah:

'In those days and at that time,
I will make a virtuous Branch grow for David,
who shall practise honesty and integrity in the land.
In those days Judah shall be saved
and Israel shall dwell in confidence.
And this is the name the city will be called:
The Lord-our-integrity.' **The word of the Lord.**

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 24:4-5,8-9,10,14. R. v.1)

R. To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

Lord, make me know your ways.
Lord, teach me your paths.
Make me walk in your truth, and teach me:
for you are God my saviour. **R.**

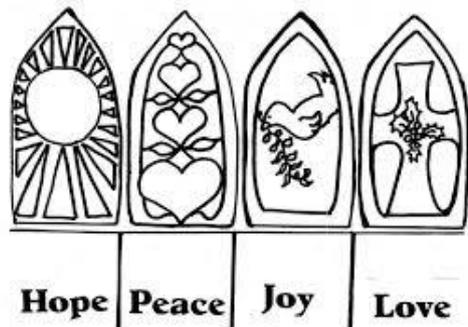
The Lord is good and upright.
He shows the path to those who stray,
he guides the humble in the right path;
he teaches his way to the poor. **R.**

His ways are faithfulness and love
for those who keep his covenant and will.
The Lord's friendship is for those who revere him;
to them he reveals his covenant. **R.**

SECOND READING A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians (3:12-4:2)

May the Lord be generous in increasing your love and make you love one another and the whole human race as much as we love you. And may he so confirm your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless in the sight of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus Christ comes with all his saints.

Finally, brothers, we urge you and appeal to you in the Lord Jesus to make more and more progress in the kind of life that you are meant to live: the life that God wants, as you learnt from us, and as you are already living it. You have not forgotten the instructions we gave you on the authority of the Lord Jesus. **The word of the Lord.**



Alleluia, alleluia! Let us see, O Lord, your mercy and give us your saving help. Alleluia!

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THE HOLY GOSPEL A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke
(21:25-28,34-36)

Jesus said to his disciples: 'There will be signs in the sun and moon and stars; on earth nations in agony, bewildered by the clamour of the ocean and its waves; men dying of fear as they await what menaces the world, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of

Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand erect, hold your heads high, because your liberation is near at hand.

'Watch yourselves, or your hearts will be coarsened with debauchery and drunkenness and the cares of life, and that day will be sprung on you suddenly, like a trap. For it will come down on every living man on the face of the earth. Stay awake, praying at all times for the strength to survive all that is going to happen, and to stand with confidence before the Son of Man.' **The Gospel of the Lord.**

The Nicene Creed

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,

begotten, not made,
consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate (all bow until man)
of the Virgin Mary,
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who
proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the
life of the world to come. Amen.

ADVENT

Advent is a season of expectation and preparation, as the Church prepares to celebrate the coming (*adventus*) of Christ in his incarnation, and also looks ahead to his final advent as judge at the end of time.

The readings and liturgies not only direct us towards Christ's birth, they also challenge the modern reluctance to confront the theme of divine judgement:

Every eye shall now behold him robed in dreadful majesty.
(Charles Wesley)

The Four Last Things – Death, Judgement, Heaven and Hell – have been traditional themes for Advent meditation. The characteristic note of Advent is therefore expectation, rather than penitence, although the character of the season is easily coloured by an analogy with Lent.

The anticipation of Christmas under commercial pressure has also made it harder to sustain an appropriate sense of alert watchfulness, but the fundamental Advent prayer remains 'Maranatha' – 'Our Lord, come' (1 Corinthians 16.22). Church decorations are simple and spare, and purple is the traditional liturgical colour.

In the northern hemisphere, the Advent season falls at the darkest time of the year, and the natural symbols of darkness and light are powerfully at work throughout Advent and Christmas. The lighting of candles on an Advent wreath was imported into Britain from northern Europe in the nineteenth century and is now a common practice. The Moravian custom of the Christingle has similarly enjoyed great success in Britain since the latter part of the twentieth century; Christingle services may take place before or after Christmas.

The Third Sunday of Advent was observed in medieval times as a splash of colour in the restrained atmosphere of Advent (*Gaudete* or 'Rejoice Sunday'). This year we will set aside this day to mark the feast of Our Lady of Loretto remembering the Joy brought to Mary by Gabriel's message.

The last days of Advent were marked by the sequence of Great 'O' Antiphons, which continue to inspire modern Advent hymns and meditations.