

Two Prayers to learn this Advent

Prayer to the Holy Family

In Advent, we very much follow the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem. Here is a prayer by Pope Francis to the Holy Family asking protection and guidance for families. You can pray this prayer every day during Advent for a family member, for the whole family or for other families you know and care about. You can also make a visit to the Church, seek out the statues of Mary, St Joseph and Jesus, and pray this prayer while you are there.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph,
in you we contemplate
the splendour of true love,
to you we turn with trust.

Holy Family of Nazareth,
grant that our families too
may be places of communion and prayer,
authentic schools of the Gospel
and small domestic Churches.

Holy Family of Nazareth,
may families never again
experience violence, rejection and division:
may all who have been hurt or scandalised
find ready comfort and healing.

Holy Family of Nazareth, make us
once more mindful of the sacredness
and inviolability of the family,
and its beauty in God's plan.
Jesus, Mary and Joseph,
graciously hear our prayer.

(Pope Francis)

The Memorare

Mary is a huge part of Advent. Being the mother of Jesus, how could it be otherwise! Catholics worldwide have a special bond with the Mother of God. "We believe that the Mother of God, the new Eve, Mother of the Church, continues in heaven to exercise her maternal role on behalf of the members of Christ' (Pope St Paul VI). Mary's role in the Church is inseparable from her union with Christ and flows directly from it. We can pray with and to her (cf. CCC 2679, 2682). Here is a Marian prayer which is cherished by many. Say it often and very soon, it will be off by heart and in your heart.

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary,
that never was it known that anyone
who fled to thy protection,
implored thy help,
or sought thy intercession
was left unaided.
Inspired by this confidence,
I fly unto thee,
O Virgin of virgins, my Mother.
To thee I come, before thee I stand,
sinful and sorrowful.
O Mother of the Word Incarnate,
despise not my petitions,
but in thy clemency,
hear and answer me.

AMEN



advent 2020

AWAITING THE LIGHT IN A TIME OF PANDEMIC



*"The people that walked in darkness
has seen a great light;
on those who live in a land of deep
shadow a light has shone"*

(Isaiah 9:2)

The Advent Season

Advent begins on Sunday 29th November 2020, four Sundays before Christmas. Advent unites us to the unfolding story of salvation from the creation of the world to the coming of the Messiah Jesus. We learn about it in the Bible.

Advent brings the light of faith to our homes when life feels restrictive and uncertain. In this pamphlet you will find 3 ideas to help make this Advent meaningful.

- **The Advent Wreath**
- **A Countdown Advent Chain**
- **Two Prayers to Learn this Advent**

Maybe one or more of these will be a runner for you? This time of year, people love to be creative in their homes. Be as artistic and as imaginative as you like. But remember too, you can sit quietly and reflectively with a Bible, a Prayer Book, a Candle, a Rosary Beads, etc. and connect with God and deepen your sense of belonging to his love. You can also visit the local Church and partake of the spirit of the Advent season in God's house.

The Advent Wreath

Many people love to decorate their homes with Christmas Wreaths. Advent Wreaths are also part of our tradition, a prominent item in homes and Churches: *Four candles, three purple and one pink set in an evergreen wreath and lit progressively as Advent unfolds and we await the coming of the Baby Jesus.* The wreath is usually set in the middle of the family table or another prominent place, and a prayer is recited as each candle is lit before a meal each day.

Why not make an Advent Wreath this year for your home and/or make the following a daily prayer as you journey through?



First Week (Purple Candle)

All powerful God, increase our strength of will for doing good, that Christ may find an eager welcome at his coming and call us to his side in the kingdom of heaven, where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen



Second Week (Purple Candle)

God of power and mercy, open our hearts in welcome. Remove the things that hinder us from receiving Christ with joy so that we may share his wisdom and become one with him when he comes in glory, for his lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen.



Third Week (Pink Candle)

Lord God, may we, your people, who look forward to the birthday of Christ, experience the joy of salvation and celebrate that feast with love and thanksgiving. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen



Fourth Week (Purple Candle)

Father, all-powerful God, your eternal Word took flesh on our earth when the Virgin Mary placed her life at the service of your plan. Lift our minds in watchful hope to hear the voice which announces his glory and open our minds to receive the Spirit who prepares us for his coming. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

Countdown Advent Chain

This is fantastic to do if you have younger children in the home which creates a real buzz around the place. Thank God too that very often, grown-ups love these activities just as much as children ... if not more sometimes!

See www.cloynediocese.ie/event/advent-countdown-resources/ for full instructions



Note: When making the chain, keep the "Have a Blessed Christmas" prayer link as the one closest to the Advent Wreath and Manger Image. All the other prayers can be linked onto this one.

Don't forget

- To glue one of the flames to the correct coloured candle each week of Advent.
- To glue the Baby Jesus to the Manger on Christmas.

Hang or position the count-down chain somewhere prominent in your home.

When do we remove the next link and pray the prayer?

Pick a special time each day – a time that you will always remember. Families often prefer at night before bedtime. Remove the paper loop on the end of the chain. Then say the prayer which is listed on that chain link for the special intention, which is also listed on that link.

