

# ADVENT

THE TIME TO PREPARE  
FOR CHRISTMAS



**ST. REGIS CATHOLIC**  
**CHURCH AND SCHOOL**  
WORSHIP • EDUCATE • SERVE

## **INTRODUCTION**

Although the stores and businesses around town may be decorated for Christmas, the Church spends the four weeks prior to the celebration of the birth of Jesus on December 25 as a period of preparation. The Advent season encourages Christians to focus on three particular themes: the Incarnation, the coming of Jesus into our midst today, and the Second Coming of Christ at the end of human history.

Over 2,000 years ago in a cave outside the town of Bethlehem, unbeknownst to the world, the Savior was born. Jesus, God-become-flesh, humbly entered into humanity as a vulnerable child, taking on our very nature to later suffer, die, and rise from the dead to restore the relationship between Creator and creature. Christmas celebrates the realization of what God had promised to the Chosen People through the Scriptures of the Old Testament.

Christians today bear the responsibility to make that message known in the world. Through acts of charity and service, by sending messages of peace and hope, and celebrating together in joy the wonders of God's love, we bring Jesus into our midst. The Incarnate Word of God becomes incarnate in our lives through our actions and responses when we commit to spreading the Gospel message this season and throughout the rest of the year.

The Church also pauses to remember and reflect upon Christ's promise of returning at the culmination of human history. Just as the people of the Old Testament longed for the coming of the Messiah, Christians today continue to long for His return, reflecting on the New Testament to "Be Prepared."

By pausing in the season of Advent, we anticipate all three themes as we continue the journey of faith and discipleship. We encourage our families to utilize this prayer as a resource to better prepare our souls for the miracle of Christmas and all it entails.

## **INSTRUCTIONS**

We recommend that each family place an Advent wreath in a prominent location in their homes with three violet and one pink candles. The white candle, symbolizing Christ and the day of Christmas, is optional. Traditionally, the wreath is composed of some sort of greenery, but a family can decide to make it out of any material they desire.

We encourage each family to commit to a time each day for the family to come together to pray the prayers. It can be in the morning before the rush of school and work begins, or it can be at dinner time as an extended grace before the meal is served. For some families, right before bedtime is ideal.

Take the time as a household, as a domestic church, to gather, pause, and pray in anticipation of the celebration of Christmas, reflecting on the themes presented in this booklet. May Christ reign in our hearts ever anew as we traverse the Advent season!

## FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT: NOV. 29 - DEC. 5, 2020

**Theme:** Hope.

*Light the first purple candle.*

**Reflection:** Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah would be born of a virgin, and He would be called “Immanuel” - “God with us.” As the people of the Old Testament awaited the coming of the Messiah, we are given hope that God’s promises come true.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, when you were ready, you sent us your Son, Jesus, born of the Virgin Mary. Please help us prepare the way for Him to be born again in our hearts this Christmas. Amen.



## SECOND WEEK OF ADVENT: DEC. 6 - 12, 2020

**Theme:** Love.

*Light the first and second purple candles.*

**Reflection:** God chose Mary to bear His Son. Mary obeyed God because she loved God. Thus, God was able to save the world through Jesus, and God did so because God so loved the world and all humans, including me.

**Prayer:** Dear God, thank you for sending us Jesus and for giving us Mary to be our mother. Dear Mother, help us to feel Jesus’ love in our hearts this Christmas. Amen.

## THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT: DEC. 13 - 19, 2020

**Theme:** Joy.

*Light the first and second purple candles and the pink candle.*

**Reflection:** Joseph and Mary left Nazareth and traveled to Bethlehem for the census. Although it was an obstacle, they met all the events in their lives with great joy knowing Jesus' birth was drawing near.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, Joseph and Mary trusted you even when they did not understand. Help us to obey you even in trials. Then we will know your peace and joy. Amen.



## FOURTH WEEK OF ADVENT: DEC. 20 - 24, 2020

**Theme:** Peace.

*Light the three purple candles and the pink candle.*

**Reflection:** Joseph and Mary found no place at the inn, but only a stable where animals were fed. There they waited for Jesus to be born. There, in the calm of the night, they experienced peace.

**Prayer:** Dear God, very soon we will rejoice in the birth of Your Son. Help us to prepare for Christmas, knowing that Jesus is the King of Peace and reigns in our hearts. May that peace grow through us and into the world. Amen.



## CHRISTMAS: DEC. 25 - JAN 6

**Theme:** Jesus. *Light the white candle.*

**Reflection:** Jesus is born! Advent is over, and we celebrate the birth of Christ.

**Prayer:** Dear God, thank you for the gift of your Son, Jesus. May our hearts be open to receive you and others in your name just as Mary and Joseph did in the manger in Bethlehem. Help us to celebrate with great joy all that Jesus promises us. Amen.