



ADVENT WREATH RITUALS

The Day Before Advent Blessing of the Wreath

Father: O God, by whose word all things are sanctified, pour forth Thy blessing upon this wreath, and grant that we who use it may prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ and may receive from Thee abundant graces. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

First Sunday of Advent As Mother lights the 1st candle

Scripture (John 1:1-5; Psalm 49:2-5, 71:2-8, 8-15):

Father: In the beginning was the Word: and the Word was with God: and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him: and without him was made nothing that was made. In him was life: and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness: and the darkness did not comprehend it.

Out of Sion the loveliness of his beauty. God shall come manifestly: our God shall come, and shall not keep silence. A fire shall burn before him: and a mighty tempest shall be round about him. He shall call heaven from above, and the earth, to judge his people. Gather ye together his saints to him: who set his covenant before sacrifices.

Give to the king thy judgment, O God: and to the king's son thy justice: To judge thy people with justice, and thy poor with judgment. Let the mountains receive peace for the people: and the hills justice. He shall judge the poor of the people, and he shall save the children of the poor: and he shall humble the oppressor. And he shall continue with the sun, and before the moon, throughout all generations. He shall come down like rain upon the fleece; and as showers falling gently upon the earth. In his days shall justice spring up, and abundance of peace, till the moon be taken sway. And all kings of the earth shall adore him: all nations shall serve him. For he shall deliver the poor from the mighty: and the needy that had no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy: and he shall save the souls of the poor. He shall redeem their souls from usuries and iniquity: and their names shall be honourable in his sight. And he shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Arabia, for him they shall always adore: they shall bless him all the day.

Blessing:

Father: Stir up Thy power, we beseech Thee, O Lord, and come: that from the threatening dangers of our sins we may deserve to be rescued by Thy protection, and to be saved by Thy deliverance. Who livest and reignest, with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, world without end. **R. Amen.**

Father: Alleluia, alleluia. Ostende nobis, Domine, misericordiam tuam, et salutare tuum da nobis. Amen. (*Alleluia, alleluia. Show us, O Lord, Thy mercy; and grant us Thy salvation. Alleluia.*)

Second Sunday of Advent

As Mother lights the 1st and 2nd candles in order

Scripture (Isaias 11:1-10):

Father: And there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root. And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: the spirit of wisdom, and of understanding, the spirit of counsel, and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge, and of godliness. And he shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge according to the sight of the eyes, nor reprove according to the hearing of the ears. But he shall judge the poor with justice, and shall reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked. And justice shall be the girdle of his loins: and faith the girdle of his reins. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb: and the leopard shall lie down with the kid: the calf and the lion, and the sheep shall abide together, and a little child shall lead them. The calf and the bear shall feed: their young ones shall rest together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp: and the weaned child shall thrust his hand into the den of the basilisk. They shall not hurt, nor shall they kill in all my holy mountain, for the earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the covering waters of the sea. In that day the root of Jesse, who standeth for an ensign of the people, him the Gentiles shall beseech, and his sepulchre shall be glorious.

Blessing:

Father: Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to prepare the way of Thine only-begotten Son: that through His coming we may attain to serve Thee with purified minds. Who liveth and reigneth, with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, world without end. **R. Amen**

Father: Alleluia, alleluia. Laetatus sum in his quae dicta sunt mihi: in domum Domini ibimus. Alleluia. (*Alleluia, alleluia. I rejoiced at the things that were said to me: We shall go unto the house of the Lord. Alleluia.*)

Third Sunday of Advent

As Mother lights the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd candles in order

Scripture (Isaias 9:2, 6-7, 40:3-5, 52:7, 7:14-15):

Father: The people that walked in darkness, have seen a great light: to them that dwelt in the region of the shadow of death, light is risen.

For a CHILD IS BORN to us, and a son is given to us, and the government is upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, God the Mighty, the Father of the world to come, the Prince of Peace. His empire shall be multiplied, and there shall be no end of peace: he shall sit upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom; to establish it and strengthen it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth and for ever: the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

The voice of one crying in the desert: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the wilderness the paths of our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall become straight, and the rough ways plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh together shall see, that the mouth of the Lord hath spoken.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, and that preacheth peace: of him that sheweth forth good, that preacheth salvation, that saith to Sion: Thy God shall reign!

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign. Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel. He shall eat butter and honey, that he may know to refuse the evil, and to choose the good.

Blessing:

Father: Incline Thine ear, we beseech Thee, O Lord, to our petitions: and, by the grace of Thy visitation, enlighten the darkness of our minds. Who livest and reignest, with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, world without end. **R. Amen.**

Father: Alleluia, alleluia. Excita, Domine, potentiam tuam, et veni ut salvos facias nos. Alleluia. (*Alleluia, alleluia. Stir up, O Lord, Thy might, and come to save us. Alleluia.*)

Fourth Sunday of Advent

As Mother lights all the candles in order

Scripture (Luke 1:24-33, 2:1-6; Apocalypse 22:20):

Father: And in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David: and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel being come in, said unto her: Hail,

full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. Who having heard, was troubled at his saying and thought with herself what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said to her: Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God. Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb and shalt bring forth a son: and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the most High; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father; and he shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever. And of his kingdom there shall be no end.

And it came to pass that in those days there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that the whole world should be enrolled. This enrolling was first made by Cyrinus, the governor of Syria. And all went to be enrolled, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem: because he was of the house and family of David. To be enrolled with Mary his espoused wife, who was with child. And it came to pass that when they were there, her days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

He that giveth testimony of these things, saith, Surely I come quickly: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Blessing:

Father: O Lord, we beseech Thee, stir up Thy power, and come, and with great might succor us: that by the help of Thy grace that which is hindered by our sins may be hastened by Thy merciful forgiveness: Who livest and reignest, with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, world without end. **R. Amen.**

Father: Alleluia, alleluia. Veni, Domine, et noli tardare: relaxa facinora plebis tuae Israel. Alleluia. (*Alleluia, alleluia. Come, O Lord, and tarry not: forgive the sins of Thy people Israel. Alleluia.*)

SYMBOLS & MEANING

The circular shape of the wreath is a symbol of eternity, and the greenery symbolizes hope and renewal. The colors of the typically-used violet and rose candles symbolize penance and joy, respectively. Each candle also represents one of the four weeks of Advent, and one thousand years of the four thousand years that passed between Adam and Eve to Christ's coming -- such a long time to wait for the Messiah!

The first candle also recalls the Patriarchs; the second candle recalls the Prophets; the third candle recalls St. John the Baptist; and the final candle recalls Our Lady.

One more candle is lit each week at dinnertime, the progressive lighting of the candles symbolizing the expectation and hope surrounding our Lord's first coming into the world -- with each successive candle representing 1,000 years that Israel waited -- and our anticipation of His second coming to judge the living and the dead. The candles are kept burning throughout the Sunday supper, and then are immediately blown out afterward (candles can be replaced and greenery freshened as needed).

At midnight on Christmas Eve, the Advent wreath is replaced by a white "Christ candle" that is suitably adorned with holly, or by being carved with symbols of Christ, etc. This Christ Candle is used until the Epiphany or Candlemas, depending on the family's particular Christmas customs. The greenery of the Advent wreath can now be decorated and turned into a Christmas wreath for use throughout the Christmas season.