

ADVENT 2020  
Awaiting the Light in a Time of Pandemic

“The people that walked in darkness have 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 29<sup>th</sup> November, 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 read about it in the Bible.

Advent brings the light of faith to our homes when life feels restrictive and uncertain. In this short pamphlet you will find 3 ideas to help make this Advent special and 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 very 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 for you. And 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 dining-room 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  
one God, for ever 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,  
one 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]***

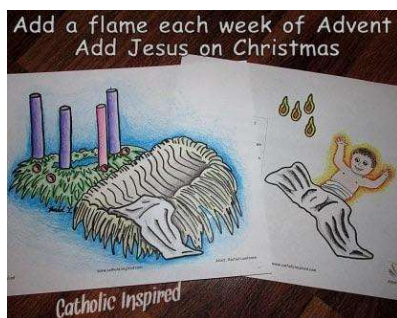
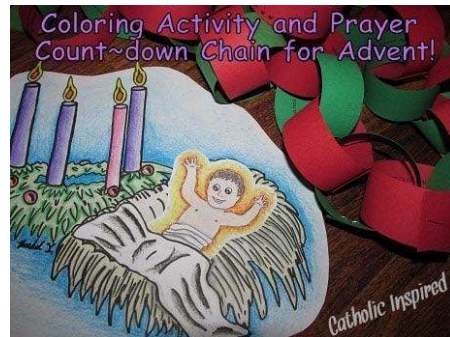
Father, all-powerful God,  
Your eternal Word took flesh on our earth  
when the Virgin Mary placed her life  
at the service of your plan.  
Lift our minds in watchful hope  
to hear the voice which announces his glory  
and open our minds to receive the Spirit  
who prepares us for his coming.  
We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

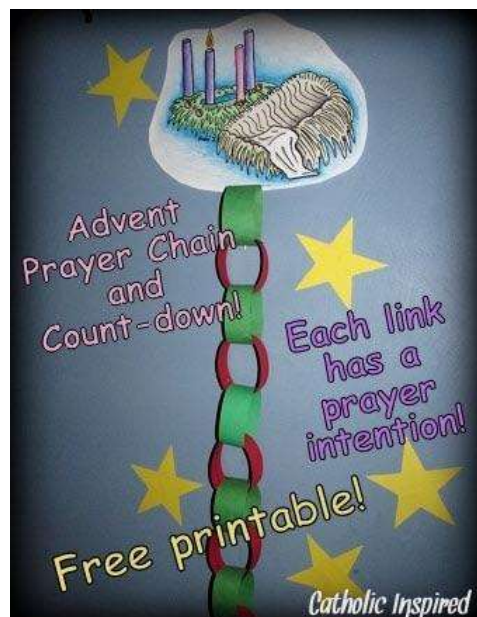
- to glue one of the flames to the correct coloured candle each week of Advent
- to glue the Baby Jesus to the Manger on Christmas.



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.



## 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 special 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.

#### Prayer to the Holy Family

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 scandalized  
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. Because of Mary's singular cooperation with the action of the Holy Spirit, the Church loves to pray in communion with the Virgin Mary, to magnify with her the great things the Lord has done for her and to entrust supplications and praises 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.

#### The Memorare

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

*This is a Diocese of Cloyne Faith Formation Initiative, Advent 2020 in conjunction with other Roman Catholic Dioceses in the Metropolitan of the Archdiocese of Cashel & Emily.*