

THE FOURTH WEEK

The father of the household lights all four candles in proper sequence during the fourth week after repeating the following prayer.



Father: Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord, your grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son was made known by the message of an Angel, may by his Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of his Resurrection. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Theme: Love

Person: Blessed Virgin Mary

Antiphon: "Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus." *Lk 1:30*

After Advent

For the Christmas Season which follows immediately after Advent, candles and ribbons can be changed to white, or a Christ Candle (white pillar or taper candle) can be inserted in the middle of the wreath and having the candles burn during the principal meal each day of the Christmas Season is a customary and appropriate practice.

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The Advent Wreath

Ceremony and Prayers



BLESSING THE ADVENT WREATH:

Begin lighting the Advent wreath at the evening meal on the Saturday before the first Sunday in Advent with the blessing of the wreath.

(The head of the household is the one designated to say the prayers following which various members of his family light the candles. If the group is not a family then a leader may be selected to say the prayers and others appointed to light the candles.)

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.

Then follows the prayer which is said before the evening meal each night of the first week in Advent. The short antiphon from Scripture could also be added after the prayer. During the actual lighting a song can be sung, such as O Come, O Come Emmanuel or Light One Candle.

THE FIRST WEEK:



Father: Grant your faithful, we pray, almighty God, the resolve to run forth to meet your Christ with righteous deeds at his coming, so that, gathered at his right hand, they may be worthy to possess the heavenly Kingdom.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

Theme: Hope

Person: Isaiah the Prophet

Antiphon: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. *Is. 9:2*

Each night the first purple candle is lighted and is left burning during the meal.

THE SECOND WEEK



Father: Almighty and merciful God, may no earthly undertaking hinder those who set out in haste to meet your Son, but may our learning of heavenly wisdom gain us admittance to his company. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Theme: Peace

Person: St. John the Baptist

Antiphon: The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. *Mt. 3:3*

Two purple candles are lit, and both burn during the evening meal as before.

THE THIRD WEEK

The joyful Sunday in Advent (known as Gaudete) is represented by rose (or pink) instead of the penitential purple color.

Father: O God, who see how your people faithfully await the feast of the Lord's Nativity, enable us, we pray, to attain the joys of so great a salvation and to celebrate them always with solemn worship and glad rejoicing.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Theme: Joy

Person: St. Joseph

Antiphon: "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit." *Mt. 1:20*

The three candles are extinguished immediately following the meal.

