



ADVENT WREATH
PRAYERS AND SCRIPTURES
&
THE GREAT O ANTIPHONS
OF ADVENT

THE ADVENT WREATH

The **circle of the wreath** reminds us of God Himself, His eternity and endless mercy, which has no beginning or end. The **green of the wreath** speaks of the hope that we have in God, the hope of newness, of renewal, of eternal life. **Candles** symbolize the visible light of God coming into the world through the birth of His son. The **four outer candles** represent the 'light before dawn', the period of waiting during the four Sundays of Advent, which themselves symbolize the four centuries of waiting between the prophet Malachi and the birth of Christ. The **center candle** is white and is called the **Christ Candle**. It is traditionally lit on Christmas Eve or Day. The **central location of the Christ Candle** reminds us that the incarnation is the heart of the season, giving light to the world.

The observance of an Advent Season is very old, and the first Sunday in Advent serves to mark the beginning of the new Christian year. For all Christians, the season of Advent (from the Latin *adventus* meaning 'coming') focuses on the theme of the Lord's coming:

1. The Nativity when the Incarnate Christ is born, He 'arrives' visibly to all, and this in fulfillment of His many and great promises in Scripture.
2. The daily coming of Christ and His Kingdom into the world especially through the Church.
3. The Second Coming of Christ at the end of the Age.

So, the basic character of Advent is generally more subdued, penitential, and a season of some measure of abstinence from rich, and 'pleasure' foods. The English and Celtic traditions (and most of the West) exercised *some* measure of abstinence except Sundays because the Lord's Day is always a celebration and considered inappropriate for fasting.

Advent is marked by a spirit of expectation, of anticipation, of preparation, of longing. There is a yearning for deliverance from the evils of the world, first expressed by Israelite slaves in Egypt as they cried out from their bitter oppression. It is the cry of those who have experienced the tyranny of injustice in a world under the curse of sin, and yet who have hope of deliverance by a God who has heard the cries of oppressed slaves and brought deliverance!

It is that hope, however faint at times, and that God, however distant He sometimes seems, which brings to the world the anticipation of a King who will rule with truth, justice, and righteousness over His people and in His whole creation. It is *that* hope that once anticipated, and now anticipates anew, the reign of an Anointed One, a Messiah, who will bring peace and justice and righteousness to the world.

Part of the expectation also anticipates a judgment on sin and a calling of the world to accountability before God. We long for God to come and set the world right! Yet, as the prophet Amos warned, the expectation of a coming judgment at the "Day of the Lord" may not be the day of light that we might want, because the penetrating light of God's judgment on sin will shine just as brightly on God's people.

May the Lord bless our Advent intentions as we approach the first of the three great Festivals of Light, **Blessings, Fr. Wayne**

FIRST SUNDAY AND WEEK OF ADVENT

*The **first candle** is traditionally the candle of **Expectation** or **Hope** (or in some traditions, **Prophecy**). This draws attention to the anticipation of the coming of a Messiah that weaves its way like a golden thread through Old Testament history. As God's people were abused by power hungry kings, led astray by self-centered prophets, and lulled into apathy by half-hearted religious leaders, there arose a longing among some for God to raise up a new king who could show them how to be God's people. They yearned for a return of God's dynamic presence in their midst.*

Directions:

Light the 1st purple candle.

Scriptures:

Sun	Malachi 3:1-6
Mon	Isaiah 11:1-10
Tue	Luke 1:26-38
Wed	Isaiah 7:10-14
Thur	Matthew 1:18-24
Fri	Isaiah 51:1-11
Sat	Isaiah 1: 1-20

Prayer:

Stir up by thy power, O Lord, and come,
That by thy protection we may be rescued
From the dangers that beset us through our sins;
And be a Redeemer to deliver us;
Who livest and reignest with God the Father
In the unity of the Holy Spirit,
Ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Alternate/Complementary Prayer:

O Emmanuel, Jesus Christ,
Desire of every nation,
Savior of all peoples,
Come and dwell among us.
(From *Christmas Prayers*, Victor Hoagland, C.P.)

SECOND SUNDAY AND WEEK OF ADVENT

Directions:

Light the 1st purple candle and repeat the 1st week's prayer.
Light the 2nd purple candle.

Scriptures:

Sun	Micah 5:2
Mon	Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11
Tue	Isaiah 2:1-5
Wed	Matthew 3:1-6
Thur	Isaiah 64
Fri	Isaiah 52:1-10
Sat	Malachi 3:1-5

Prayer:

Stir up our hearts, O Lord,
To prepare the paths of thine Only-begotten Son:
That we may worthily serve thee
With hearts purified by His coming:
Who livest and reignest with God the Father
In the unity of the Holy Spirit,
Ever one God, world without end. Amen

Alternate/Complementary Prayer:

O King of all nations, Jesus Christ,
only joy of every heart,
Come and save your people.
(From *Christmas Prayers*, Victor Hoagland, C.P.)

THIRD SUNDAY AND WEEK OF ADVENT

*The **third candle** is traditionally Pink or Rose, and symbolizes **Joy** at the soon Advent of the Christ. Sometimes the colors of the sanctuary and vestments are also changed to Rose for this Sunday. However, as noted above, increasingly in many churches, the pink Advent candle is used on the fourth Sunday to mark the joy at the impending Nativity of Jesus.*

Directions:

Light the 1st purple candle and repeat the 1st week's prayer.

Light the 2nd purple candle and repeat the 2nd week's prayer.

Light the rose candle.

Scriptures:

Sun Jeremiah 1:4-10, 17-19

Mon Isaiah 9:6-7

Tues John 1:19-34

Wed Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

Thur Hosea 14: 4-9

Fri Philippians 2:1-11

Sat Amos 9:11-15

Prayer:

We beseech thee to hear our prayers, O Lord,
And by the grace of thy coming enlighten our darkened
minds:

Thou who livest and reignest with God the Father
In the unity of the Holy Spirit,
One God forever and ever. Amen.

Alternate/Complementary Prayer:

O Key of David, Jesus Christ,
The gates of heaven open at your command,
Come and show us the way to salvation.

(From *Christmas Prayers*, Victor Hoagland, C.P.)

FOURTH SUNDAY AND WEEK OF ADVENT

Directions:

Light the 1st purple candle and repeat the 1st week's prayer.
Light the 2nd purple candle and repeat the 2nd week's prayer.
Light the **rose** candle and repeat the 3rd week's prayer.
Light the 4th candle.

Prayer:

Pour forth thy power, O Lord, and come:
Assist us by that mighty power,
So that by thy grace and merciful kindness
We may swiftly receive the salvation that our sins impede:
Who livest and reignest with thee in the unity of the Holy
Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Alternate/Complementary Prayer:

O Wisdom, holy Word of God, Jesus Christ,
All things are in your hands,
Come and show us the way to salvation.
(from *Christmas Prayers*, Victor Hoagland, C.P.)

Scriptures:

Sun	Malachi 3:1-5
Mon	Romans 8:18-25
Tues	Isaiah 52:7-10
Wed	Revelation 21:1-4
Thur	Isaiah 40:1-11
Fri	Jeremiah 33:7-16
Sat	Zechariah 2

CHRISTMAS DAY & CHRISTMASTIDE

Directions for 5-Candle Wreaths (the fifth is the white candle being in the center of the wreath):

Light four preceding candles, repeating each week's prayers while lighting them.

Light the center white candle.

Directions for 4-Candle Wreaths:

Replace all Advent Candles with White Candles and light.

Prayer:

God of love, Father of all,
The darkness that covered the earth
Has given way to the bright dawn of your Word made flesh.
Make us a people of this light.
Make us faithful to your Word
That we may bring your life to the waiting world.
Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(From The Roman Missal, Catholic Book Publishing Co.)

Alternate/Complementary Prayer:

Let the just rejoice, for their Justifier is born.
Let the sick and infirm rejoice, for their Savior is born.
Let the captives rejoice, for their Redeemer is born.
Let slaves rejoice, for their Master is born.
Let all men rejoice, for their Liberator is born.
Let all Christians rejoice, for Jesus Christ is born.

(St. Augustine of Hippo)

Scriptures:

Isaiah 9:1-67

Luke 2:1-20

John 1:1-18

Titus 2:11-14

Isaiah 35

THE GREAT O ANTIPHONS OF ADVENT

The wonder and mystery of the coming of the Lord is wonderfully highlighted in a very longstanding Church tradition called ‘The Great O Antiphons.’ The historic record finds a first mention of them as early as the late fifth century and by the ninth century, we see them widely used in the Church’s Advent intentions.

An antiphon is a psalm, hymn, or prayer sung in alternate parts or a verse or a series of verses sung as a prelude or conclusion to some part of a worship service. The O Antiphons are typically said or sung before and after the Magnificat (Mary’s Song) in the Evening Prayer Office. They worked their way into the larger devotional life of the Church so that they are often read or sung in family devotions as well.

The O Antiphons highlight different Names of Messiah in the Old Covenant Scriptures. In the Anglican tradition, eight antiphons are sung or recited one each day from **December 16th until Christmas Eve.**

If you happen to be one of those people who commonly observe how things in the world are connected, you might notice that each one of these is the foundation for verses in the famous hymn, *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.*

The Devotion

December 16th—*O Sapientia*

O Wisdom, who didst issue out of the mouth of the most High,
and dost reach from one end of the world to the other, mightily
and sweetly ordering all things: Come and teach us the way of
prudence.

Or sing:

O come, thou Wisdom from on high,
Who orderest all things mightily;
To us the path of knowledge show,
And teach us in her ways to go.

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee,
O Israel

Scripture Reading: Ecclesiastes 24:1-8 or Proverbs 8:1, 22-32

December 17th—*O Adonai*

O Lord and ruler of the house of Israel, who didst appear to
Moses in a burning bush, and didst give him the law on Sinai:
Come and deliver us with an outstretched arm.

Or sing:

O come, O come, thou Lord of might,
who to thy tribes on Sinai's height
In ancient times didst give the law,
In cloud and majesty and awe.

Refrain: Rejoice, Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee,
O Israel!

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 43:1-7

December 18th— *O Radix Jesse*

O Root of Jesse, who standest for an ensign to the peoples, at whom kings shall shut their mouths, and to whom the gentiles shall pray: Come and deliver us, and do not delay.

Or sing:

O come, thou Rod of Jesse's stem,
From every foe deliver them
That trust thy mighty power to save,
And give them vict'ry o'er the grave.

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee,
O Israel!

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 11:1-9

December 19th— *O Clavis David*

O Key of David, and Scepter of the house of Israel; who openest and no one shutteth, who shuttest and no one openeth: come and bring the prisoners out of the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death.

Or sing:

O come, thou Key of David, come,
And open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee,
O Israel!

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 22:20-24

December 20th—*O Oriens*

O Day-Spring, radiant everlasting Light, and Sun of Righteousness: Come and enlighten those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death.

Or sing:

O come, thou Day-spring from on high,
And cheer us by thy drawing night;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadow put to flight.

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee,
O Israel!

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 42:1-7

December 21st—*O Rex Gentium*

O King of the Nations, and their Desire; the Cornerstone who dost unite the divided into one: Come and save mankind, whom thou didst create out of clay.

Or sing:

O come, Desire of nations, bind
In one the hearts of all mankind;
Bid thou our sad divisions cease,
And be Thyself our King of Peace.

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee,
O Israel!

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 45:8-13

December 22nd—O Emmanuel

O Emmanuel, our King and Lawgiver, the One whom the Gentiles expect, and their Salvation: Come and save us, O Lord our God.

Or sing:

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee,
O Israel!

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 33:20-22 and Isaiah 7:14

December 23rd— O Virgo Virginum

O Virgin of virgins, how shall this be? For neither was there any like thee before thee, nor shall there be after: Daughters of Jerusalem, why marvel at me? The thing which ye behold is a divine mystery.

Or sing:

O glorious Virgin, Salem quakes.
What news is this that Gabriel breaks?
Behold, the sacred mystery:
For God himself takes flesh in thee.

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee,
O Israel!

Scripture Reading: Luke 1:26-38