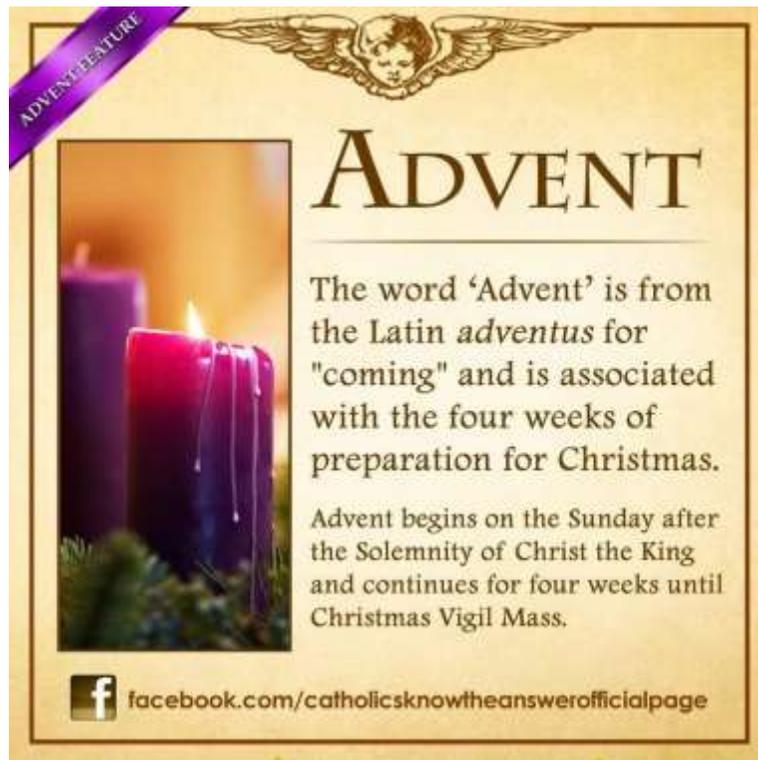


Lesson 9: Advent

Please click twice to watch the video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fFTTt1AxINs&t=157s>



The meaning of Advent season is two-fold, reminding us both to remember the past and to look to the future. Advent is also a time to direct our hearts and minds to the joyful expectation of Christ's Second Coming.

During Advent, reflection and prayer help us to maintain awareness of God's mercy towards us.

The liturgical year begins with Advent, and with it the Christmas season. It is the magic time of the year when hope becomes most intense for the majority of Christians. We usually say that the main significance of Advent is to prepare ourselves to celebrate Jesus's arrival in the world.

Advent is a time of great activity, which takes us from one place to another, often overwhelming us, but also filling us with renewed energy.

We are all able to reflect the light that is Jesus. We still have time to slow down, take a break and devote time to getting ready and enjoying the wonderful Advent celebrations with our families. We can still be the light to shine on others for them to see Jesus, the Light of the World. We shall shine lights of friendship, love, companionship, generosity, compassion and peace.

The Advent season helps us to prepare for the coming of the Son of God, the Light of the World.

A popular Advent tradition among both Catholics and Christians is that of the Advent Wreath. It is a simple but beautiful way to capture the meaning and symbolism of Advent.

The tradition of using an Advent Wreath originated in pre-Christian times. People would light candles during the winter in the absence of the sun. Sometimes there was one candle per day and in some cases the candles were placed on a wreath. During the Middle Ages, Christians adapted the wreath to serve as a preparation for Advent. During the 1600s, the Advent Wreath had become a formal Advent tradition.

Each Advent Wreath contains four candles, one for every week of Advent. The candles provide a strong contrast between dark and light. Jesus is the light of the world that came down to dispel the darkness that exists in our hearts and in the world because of the darkness of sin.

Each week, a new candle is lighted gradually dispelling more and more of the darkness as we draw ever closer to the coming of Christ at Christmas. By the final week of Advent, all four candles are lit reminding us that the time to rejoice has finally arrived!

The candles on the Advent Wreath are three violet ones and one rose one – exactly the same as the colors of the four weeks of Advent.

Some Advent Wreaths also contain a fifth white candle symbolizing purity – the Christ Candle – that can be lit during the Christmas Season.

Special Meaning

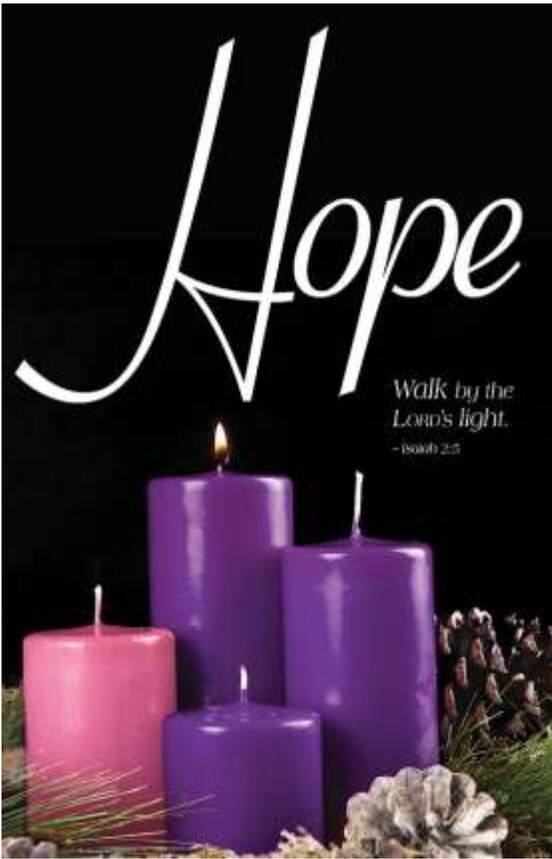
Each candle on the Advent Wreath has a special name corresponding to a particular week of Advent.

During the first week we light the *Prophet's Candle* as we focus on the virtue of *hope*. This week is a time to acknowledge that Jesus is coming. We should begin preparing our hearts to welcome Him at Christmas.

The second week of Advent is a time to practice the virtue of *faith* as we light the *Bethlehem Candle*. We should call to mind the journey of Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem. When they arrived there was no room at the inn – no room for Jesus. It is a time to continue drawing closer to Christ so that when He comes He may find a home in our hearts.

On Gaudete Sunday, the third Sunday of Advent, we celebrate *joy* and light the *Shepherd's Candle*. On Christmas night the Angels appeared to the shepherds and brought them, as the Bible says, “news of great joy!”

The final week of Advent is a time of *peace* as we light the *Angel's Candle*. We should be mindful of the Angels' announcement of, “Peace on earth, good will to men!”



Hope

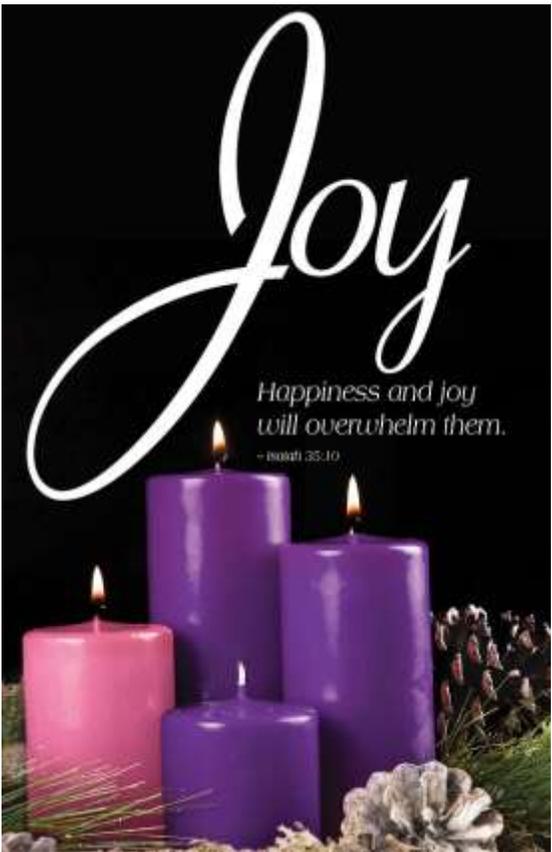
Walk by the
Lord's light.
- Isaiah 2:5



A voice of one
crying out in
the desert,
Prepare the
way of the Lord

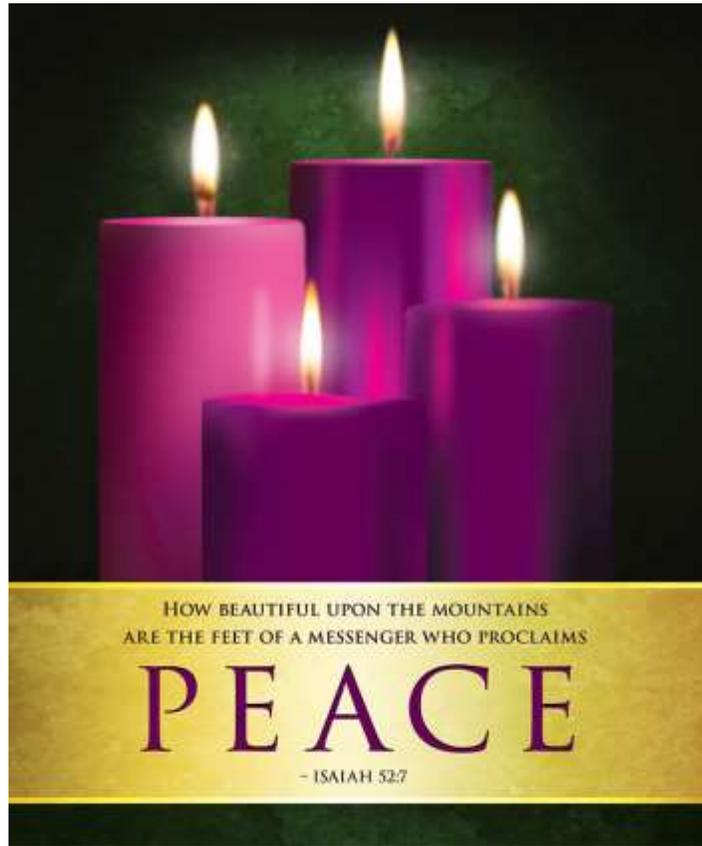
Matthew 3:3

Faith



Joy

Happiness and joy
will overwhelm them.
- Isaiah 35:10



HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS
ARE THE FEET OF A MESSENGER WHO PROCLAIMS

PEACE

- ISAIAH 52:7