



## The Advent Wreath

The use of the Advent Wreath is a traditional practice which has found its place in the Church as well as in the home. The blessing of an Advent Wreath takes place on the First Sunday of Advent.

Customarily the Advent Wreath is constructed of a circle of evergreen branches into which are inserted four candles. According to tradition, three of the candles are violet and the fourth is rose.

The candles represent the four weeks of Advent and the number of candles lighted each week corresponds to the number of the current week of Advent. The rose candle is lighted on the Third Sunday of Advent, also known as Gaudete Sunday. Gaudete is the Latin word for rejoice, and comes from the traditional "O Antiphons" of the ancient church, which were sung during evening services. They are included at the back of this leaflet for your prayer purposes. They all come from the various prophesies of Isaiah.

"The Benedictine monks arranged these antiphons with a definite purpose. If one starts with the last title and takes the first letter of each one—Emmanuel, Rex, Oriens, Clavis, Radix, Adonai, Sapientia—the Latin words *ero cras* are formed, meaning, "Tomorrow, I will come". Therefore, Jesus, whose coming Christians have prepared for in Advent and whom they have addressed in these seven Messianic titles, now speaks to them: "Tomorrow, I will come." So the "O Antiphons" not only bring intensity to their Advent preparation, but bring it to a joyful conclusion. "

Blessing of the Wreath (on the First Sunday of Advent)

Christ came to bring us salvation and has promised to come again. Let us pray that we may be always ready to welcome him. **R. Come, Lord Jesus.**

That the keeping of Advent may open our hearts to God's love, we pray to the Lord. **R.**

That the light of Christ may penetrate the darkness of sin, we pray to the Lord. **R.**

That this wreath may constantly remind us to prepare for the coming of Christ, we pray to the Lord. **R.**

That the Christmas season may fill us with peace and joy as we strive to follow the example of Jesus, we pray to the Lord. **R.**

Lord our God, we praise you for your Son, Jesus Christ: he is Emmanuel, the hope of the peoples, he is the wisdom that teaches and guides us, he is the Savior of every nation. Lord God, let your blessing come upon us as we light the candles of this wreath. May the wreath and its light be a sign of Christ's promise to bring us salvation. May he come quickly and not delay. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### ADVENT 1

Blessed are you, Sovereign Lord, God of our ancestors: to you be praise and glory forever. You called the patriarchs to live by the light of faith and to journey in the hope of your promised fulfillment.

May we be obedient to your call and be ready and watchful to receive your Christ, a lamp to our feet and a light to our path; for you are our light and our salvation.

**Lord Jesus, Light of the world,  
born in David's city of Bethlehem,  
born like him to be a king:  
Be born in our hearts at Christmas,  
be king of our lives today. Amen.**

People of God: awake! The day is coming soon when you shall see God face to face. Remember the ways and the works of God. Christ calls you out of darkness to walk in the light of his coming. You are God's children. Lord make us one as we walk with Christ today and forever. Amen.

### ADVENT 2

Blessed are you, Sovereign Lord, just and true: to you be praise and glory forever. Of old, you spoke by the mouth of your prophets, but in our days, you speak through your Son, whom you have appointed the heir of all things. Grant us, your people, to walk in his light, that we may be found ready and watching when he comes again in glory and judgement; for you are our light and our salvation.

**Lord Jesus, Light of the world,  
the prophets said you would bring peace  
and save your people in trouble.  
Give peace in our hearts at Christmas  
and show all the world God's love. Amen.**

People of God: be glad! Your God delights in you. Giving you joy for sadness and turn the dark to light. Be strong in hope therefore; for your God comes to save. You are God's children. Lord make us one in the love of Christ today and forever. Amen.

### ADVENT 3

Blessed are you, Sovereign Lord, just and true: to you be praise and glory forever. Your prophet John the Baptist was witness to the truth as a burning and shining light. May we your servants rejoice in his light, and so be led to witness to him who is the Lord of our coming kingdom, Jesus our Saviour and King of the ages.

**Lord Jesus, Light of the world,  
John told the people to prepare,  
for you were very near.  
As Christmas grows closer day by day,  
help us to be ready to welcome you now. Amen.**

People of God: return! You are called to be God's own. From the mountains, announce the good news. God comes in justice and peace, to all who follow his ways. You are God's children. Lord make us one in the peace of Christ today and forever. Amen.

### ADVENT 4

Blessed are you, Sovereign Lord, merciful and gentle: to you be praise and glory forever. Your light has shone in our darkened world through the child-bearing of blessed Mary; grant that we who have seen your glory may daily be renewed in your image and prepared like her for the coming of your Son, who is the Lord and Saviour of all.

**Lord Jesus, Light of the world,  
blessed is Gabriel who brought good news;  
blessed is Mary your mother and ours.  
Bless your Church preparing for Christmas;  
and bless us your children who long for your coming. Amen.**

People of God: prepare! God, above all, maker of all, is one with us in Christ.

**Come, Lord Jesus!**

God, the mighty God, bends down in love to earth. **Come, Lord Jesus!**

God with us; God beside us, comes soon to the world he has made. **Come, Lord Jesus!**

We are God's children, we seek the coming Christ. **Come, Lord Jesus!**

### The Ancient O Antiphons

#### O Sapientia

O Wisdom, coming forth from the mouth of the Most High, reaching from one end to the other mightily, and sweetly ordering all things: Come and teach us the way of prudence.

#### O Adonai

O Adonai, and leader of the House of Israel, who appeared to Moses in the fire of the burning bush and gave him the law on Sinai: Come and redeem us with an outstretched arm.

#### ]O Radix Jesse

O Root of Jesse, standing as a sign among the peoples; before you kings will shut their mouths, to you the nations will make their prayer: Come and deliver us, and delay no longer.

### O Clavis David

O Key of David and sceptre of the House of Israel; you open and no one can shut; you shut and no one can open: Come and lead the prisoners from the prison house, those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.

### O Oriens

O Morning Star, splendor of light eternal and sun of righteousness: Come and enlighten those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.

### O Rex Gentium

O King of the nations, and their desire, the cornerstone making both one:  
Come and save the human race, which you fashioned from clay.

### O Emmanuel

O Emmanuel, our king and our lawgiver, the hope of the nations and their Saviour: Come and save us, O Lord our God.

