



Blessing an Advent Wreath

A Family Activity

You will need a Bible and four candles to celebrate this blessing.

Before your family has gathered for the blessing, select one of the following Scripture passages to be read during the blessing: [Isaiah 11:1-4, 61:1-2](#); [Mark 1:1-8](#); [James 5:7-10](#); or [Philippians 4:4-7](#). Have someone volunteer to read the passage.

Place the Advent wreath on a table and have your family gather around it. Lower the light level in the room to create an appropriate atmosphere for the blessing. Place the four candles (symbolizing the four weeks of Advent) on the table and light a single candle for the first week of Advent. Have someone lead your family in the following prayer.

Leader:

This week we begin the season of Advent, when the days grow short and darkness closes in. We are preparing to celebrate at Christmas the birth of Jesus, who is the light of the world. Let's spend some quiet time being aware of the darkness and longing for the light.

(Pause a few moments and then pray the Sign of the Cross.)

Leader:

Lord God, bless this wreath and bless us as well. May this wreath remind us of the hope and joy that Jesus brings into the world. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All:

Amen.

Leader:

Advent means "arrival." In the season of Advent, the church prepares to celebrate the coming of Jesus. We recall the past, celebrate the present, and look to the future with hope. We prepare to celebrate not only the birth of Jesus but also his presence in our family. We wait for the return of the Lord at the end of time when all hopes will be fulfilled. We await the coming of the light that

will shine in the darkness, shining light on our path to peace.

Reader:

A reading from the Book of Philippians (Joy and Peace 4:4-9)

Rejoice* in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice! Your kindness* should be known to all. The Lord is near. Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me. Then the God of peace will be with you.



Leader:

The Word of the Lord.

All:

Thanks be to God.

All:

Amen.

(Pray the Lord's Prayer.)

Blessing the Family Christmas Tree



Before Christianity came to be, trees that remained green all year round warded off evil spirits and were special to people during the winter. It wasn't until the sixteenth century in Germany that trees

were brought inside and decorated. When does the [Christmas tree](#) go up in your home or parish? Continue the tradition by gathering together and blessing this special symbol.

You may bless the tree as soon as you put it up, or you can wait until after you have decorated it. When you are ready to do the blessing, gather everyone around the tree and designate someone to lead the following prayer.

You will need water or holy water (if available) to celebrate this blessing.

Leader: Loving God, we stand before you once again. We stand here ready to celebrate the birth of your son, Jesus.

(Have everyone extend a hand in a gesture of blessing. Sprinkle water or holy water on the tree while praying the following prayer.)

(Leader: Bless this tree, this sign of life and freshness and perseverance in our midst. It stands as a reminder that you are born anew in us each day. Bless our family and friends as we celebrate this joyous season. Keep us safe in our travels, kind in

our conversations, and gracious in our giving and receiving. We ask you this in confidence, because we know you love us.

All: Amen.

(Join in singing a favorite Christmas carol, such as “O Christmas Tree” or “Joy to the World.”)

<https://www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/family/holidays-and-special-occasions/advent-and-christmas/blessing-the-family-christmas-tree>

Awaiting Baby Jesus



My heart is beating, filled with joy,
awaiting Mary's baby boy.
For with this child, we embrace
the birth of God's most precious grace.

Baby Jesus, soon to come!
For us comes the Promised One.
Baby Jesus, God's own Son,
you will be the Chosen One

to lead our flock into salvation.
Our eternal life awaits.
The birth of Jesus brings us nearer
Heaven's holy gates.

Sing with joy, and count the days,
for soon to come, the Lord we'll praise.
Rejoice that Jesus will soon arrive,
the Messiah and our faith alive.

<https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/prayer/childrens-prayers/seasonal-prayers/awaiting-baby-jesus/>