

First Week of Advent – Year B

Prepare an Advent wreath prior to starting the Advent season. You may want to incorporate a brief explanation for the students into your first celebration. Key points would be:

- *The wreath is made of evergreens which represent everlasting life*
- *It is circular with no beginning or end, representing eternity*
- *There are 4 candles representing the 4 Sundays of Advent. Three are purple which stands for a spirit of prayer and repentance throughout the season. The fourth is pink which represents joy and comes from a Mass reading of the 3rd Sunday of Advent, which states, “Rejoice in the Lord always!”*

You may also wish to have a short blessing prayer to start the first week’s liturgy. Here is an example of one:

Leader One: *Let us begin our celebration with the sign of our faith.
In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.*

Leader Two: *The people who have walked in darkness have seen a great light.
Upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom, a light has shone.*

Leader One: *Let us pray.
Father of creation and Lord of light, we ask you to bless our Advent
wreath and grace us with Your presence as we celebrate the holy
season of Advent. May these candles and our lives reflect the light of
Christ, who is the light of the world. We ask this in the name of Jesus
through the power of the Holy Spirit.*

All: *Amen.*

Light first purple candle.

Opening Song: *See table of suggested music.*

Leader: Lord God, in this beautiful Advent season of waiting and preparing for the coming of your son, Jesus, help us to renew our love for you and for those around us. Awaken in all of us our memories of goodness and reopen the doors of hope in our hearts. We ask this in your most holy name. **Amen.**

Let us open our hearts and minds and ears to hear God’s word.

Reader: A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

You, O Lord, are our father;
“Our redeemer from of old” is your name.
Why, O Lord, do you make us stray from your ways,
And harden our hearts, so that we do not fear you?
Turn back for the sake of your servants,
For the sake of the tribes that are your heritage.
Yet, O Lord, you are our Father;
We are the clay, and you are our potter;
We are all the work of your hand.

The Word of the Lord.

Psalm: Psalm 80 (try CBW III # 18 or # 28 or Glory and Praise II # 301)

Gospel Acclamation: Choose one that is familiar to your school community.

Leader: A reading from the Gospel according to Mark.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

Leader: Jesus said to his disciples, "Beware, keep alert;
For you do not know when the time will come.
It is like a man going on a journey:
When he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with a particular task,
And commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch.
Therefore, keep awake – for you do not know when the master of the house will come,
In the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn,
Or else, he might find you asleep when he comes suddenly.
And what I say to you, I say to all: Keep awake!"

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you Lord, Jesus Christ.

Reflection: *The leader or another adult may now offer a few brief thoughts on the readings and how they connect to the everyday lives of the school community. A few key points you may wish to mention are these:*

- *Advent offers us the opportunity to look at how we are living our lives and to see if we are ready for Jesus to be part of our lives.*
- *We do not know when he will come again in glory, so we must stay ready.*
- *The actions we take towards others and how we operate show our willingness to let Jesus be at the center, especially of our Christmas preparations.*

Leader: Knowing God's generous love for all of his people, we confidently place our needs before him.

The response is: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For the Church throughout the world, awaiting the coming of Christ in glory, we pray to the Lord.

For the world, longing for its promised salvation, we pray to the Lord.

For all in our community who are sick or suffering in any way, we pray to the Lord.

For our school community here at _____ School, may we be blessed with the gift of gracious, hope-filled waiting, we pray to the Lord.

Lord, you know all of our needs before we know them ourselves. Hear and answer our prayer according to what is best for us. We ask this in the name of Jesus, your Son.

All: Amen.

Leader: Now let us pray in the words that Jesus taught us.
Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Leader: Let us offer each other a sign of peace and friendship.

Allow a moment for everyone to shake hands.

Leader: Let us pray.
God, our heavenly Father, you gave us the gift of your son, Jesus. Open our eyes to see God present and active in our lives each day. Open our hearts to receive all of the blessings of this holy season of preparation. Help us to stay awake and to allow ourselves to be moulded by God, the loving Potter. Come, Lord Jesus, come.

All: Amen.

Leader: And may we be blessed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Closing Song: See table of suggested songs.

CBW III	Spirit and Song
Every Valley # 308 Listen, My People # 309 Let Heaven Rejoice # 557 O come, O Come Emmanuel # 312 Be Light for Our Eyes # 305 God of All People #314	In the Day of the Lord #121 Christ, Be Our Light # 105 City of God # 106 Find Us Ready # 109