

Blessing of an 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 or on the evening before 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 candles are violet and the fourth is rose. However, four violet or white candles may be used.

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.

When the blessing of the Advent Wreath is celebrated in the home, it is appropriate that it be blessed by a parent or another member of the family.

All make the sign of the cross as the leader says:

Our help is in the name of the Lord.

Response (R/.) Who made heaven and earth.

Then the Scripture, Isaiah 9:1-2, 5-6, is read:

Listen to the words of the Prophet Isaiah:

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; Upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone. You have brought them abundant joy and great rejoicing. As they rejoice before you as at the harvest, as people make merry when dividing spoils. For a child is born to us, a son is given us; upon his shoulder dominion rests. They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace. His dominion is vast and forever peaceful, from David's throne, and over his kingdom, which he confirms and sustains by judgment and justice, both now and forever.

Or Isaiah 63:16-17, 19; 64:2-7—You, Lord, are our redeemer.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

R/. Thanks be to God.

With hands joined, the leader says:

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. **R/.** Amen.

The blessing may conclude with a verse from "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel":

O come, desire of nations, bind
in one the hearts of humankind;
bid ev'ry sad division cease
and be thyself our Prince of peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.