

Waiting in Hope

An Advent bulletin for the home
Week Four: 20 December 2020

Linking with Your Parish

In the hustle and bustle of final Christmas preparations why not: Take some time this week to visit your parish church for a moment of quiet prayer to God. Check out the schedule for individual confession. Find out the arrangements your parish has in place for Christmas Mass attendance. See if there is anything you can do to help your parish in celebrating the Christmas Masses safely and joyfully this year.

A Suggestion for the Home for Christmas

When the time comes to place the figure of Jesus into the crib, have the youngest member of the household carry the baby Jesus to the nativity scene. The family might like to say a prayer and sing a favourite Christmas carol together as they do this. See www.Kandle.ie for a prayer that can be used.

If the family is joining a livestream of Christmas Mass, before Mass begins light a candle and place the infant figure beside it. At the end of Mass the family can 'process' together to the crib, with the youngest carrying the infant.



Keeping Christmas 2020 in the Home and Parish - a Family Prayer Companion



A four page leaflet for the home is now available on the Advent Resource page of www.kandle.ie

It contains some prayers for the 12 days of Christmas, including:

- + Christmas Eve – Prayer for placing figure of Jesus in the crib
- + Christmas Day – Prayer before your Family Christmas Meal
- + A Prayer at the Crib for the 12 days of Christmas
- + Feast of the Holy Family – A Family Prayer
- + Feast of Mary, Mother of God (January 1) – Prayer suggestion
- + Epiphany – Prayer for chalking your front door and placing Magi at the crib.

An Advent Tradition



Reconciliation: Celebrating God's Forgiveness

An important aspect of preparing for Christmas for many people is the celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation or confession. The honest assessment of our lives that Advent calls for will, invariably, lead us to seek God's forgiveness, mercy and love. As we draw closer to Christmas take some time to consider: *What in your life would you like to change? From whom do you need to share or seek forgiveness? For what do you want to say sorry to God?*

Opportunities for this sacrament may be limited this year. Look out for the schedule of individual confession in your parish. A webcam prayer service might also be available to you. Be assured that such a service or a sincere prayer asking for the Lord's mercy is already part of the journey to the Sacrament. Already before confession, a person on that journey enjoys the forgiveness of God. *See overleaf for the text of An Act of Contrition.*

Weekly Advent Gospel Link



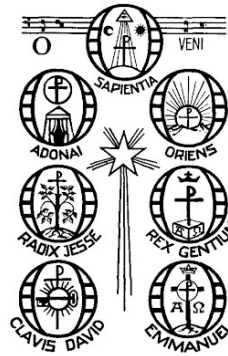
Because Mark's gospel doesn't start until the baptism of the adult Jesus, today we hear the account of the Annunciation from the gospel of Luke.

As we prepare to welcome Christ, we might embrace a few phrases from this gospel passage. The angel, a messenger from God, says to Mary and is saying to us today: *'The Lord is with you', 'Do not be afraid', 'Nothing is impossible to God'.*

At this Christmas time, can we respond to God's message to us and be the person God has created us to be - a person wonderfully made. Can we, like Mary, say to God: *'Let what you have said be done to me.'*

See kandle.ie for weekly Scripture reflections on the Advent Sunday readings by Fr Liam Lawton

An Advent hymn to think about...



On these last days of Christmas our focus is not on a particular hymn but on a set of phrases that are sung within the liturgy in the final days approaching Christmas.

The "O ANTIPHONS", traditionally sung during the last week before Christmas (December 17-23), are more than a thousand years old. The traditional Advent hymn, "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" is probably the most popular

and well known way of remembering some of the antiphons. They are called the "O Antiphons" simply because each begins with the word, "O". Originally used in monastic vespers during the last seven days before Christmas, gradually they came into use in the whole church. Today, at Evening Prayer (Vespers), the O Antiphons are used as the antiphons to introduce the Magnificat – Mary's Hymn of Praise. The Gospel Acclamation at all Masses in these seven days uses the "O Antiphons" as well.

Each antiphon denotes an attribute of the coming Christ. In Latin, they are: DECEMBER 17: O Sapiaentia (O Wisdom); DECEMBER 18: O Adonai (O Lord); DECEMBER 19: O Radix Jesse (O Root of Jesse); DECEMBER 20: O Clavis David (O Key of David); DECEMBER 21: O Oriens (O Dayspring); DECEMBER 22: O Rex Gentium (O King of the Nations); DECEMBER 23: O Emmanuel (O God With Us).' (Source: CatholicIreland.net)



Act of Contrition

O my God, I thank you for loving me. I am sorry for all my sins, for not loving others and not loving you. Help me to live like Jesus and not sin again. Amen.

An Advent Family Prayer at Bedtime for week 4

You might like to light all the candles on your Advent wreath or your Advent Candle to begin your prayer

Loving God,

On this Advent night we turn to you in prayer.

As we make our final preparations to celebrate the birth of your Son, we ask your blessing on our family.

Help us to welcome your light into our lives, a light that gives us the gift of love.

You showed us the greatness of your love in Jesus, Emmanuel, God-with-us.

You love us with an everlasting love.

May your love fill our hearts, our minds and our home.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Together we pray: **Come, Lord Jesus.**



Cathedral Parish Carol Service
Tune in live via iCatholic.ie
Led by Bishop Denis Nulty

God is With Us

Sunday 20 December 8:30pm

SPECIAL INVITATION FROM THE CATHEDRAL PARISH Parishioners across the whole diocese are invited to join Bishop Denis for the Cathedral Parish Carol Service. While many of us will miss our traditional carol services, this promises to be a very special moment of shared hope, joy



and song as we approach Christmas. This livestreamed service of carols, readings and prayers can be accessed on iCatholic.ie.