

# SEASONS OF ADVENT & CHRISTMAS: PRIMARY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



## WHAT DOES THE CURRICULUM SAY?

**WHOLE SCHOOL:** Much of the focus of the curriculum on Advent is found in the Liturgy and Prayer strand and centres around developing an understanding of the Church Year, its seasons, colours and practices. The Advent Wreath is introduced at Level 1; the origin of the crib is explored in Level 3 and the Jesse Tree is used as a tool to develop a deeper understanding of salvation history at Level 4. Th

As part of the Christian Faith Strand the children's understanding of Mary is deepened and Advent is an opportune time in which to do this.

Scripture stories connected to the birth of Jesus are explored in the Word of God Strand. Resources to teach about the seasons of Advent and Christmas are available to download on [www.kandle.ie](http://www.kandle.ie)

### **FEAST DAYS IN ADVENT & CHRISTMAS**

- |                                      |             |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| • St Nicholas                        | December 6  |
| • St Ambrose                         | December 7  |
| • Feast of the Immaculate Conception | December 8  |
| • Our Lady of Guadalupe              | December 12 |
| • St Lucy                            | December 13 |
| • Epiphany                           | January 6   |

### **CURRICULUM:**

#### **CHRISTIAN FAITH STRAND**

##### **LEVEL 1**

- God gave us the gift of Jesus
- God chose Mary to be the mother of Jesus
- Jesus is the Light of the World
- Jesus was born on Christmas day.
- Jesus was born in Bethlehem and grew up in Nazareth
- Jesus was born in a humble stable, into a poor family
- Jesus, Mary and Joseph are the Holy Family of Nazareth

##### **LEVEL 2**

- God our Father sent his son, Jesus, to tell us the 'Good News'
- God sent Jesus to show us how much he loves us and to teach us how to love others
- Jesus is the Father's greatest gift to us
- Mary listened and responded to God
- Mary was called by God to be the Mother of Jesus

##### **LEVEL 3**

- God promised to send us a Saviour
- God sent Jesus to save us from our sins
- Mary was specially preserved by God from all sin (Feast of the Immaculate Conception)
- Mary is God's Mother and Our Mother
- Mary always leads us to Jesus

- Icons and images of Mary (e.g. Mother of God, Mary of Perpetual Help, **Our Lady of Guadalupe; December 12**; Our Lady of Czestochowa).

#### **LEVEL 4**

- God the Father prepared the people of Israel for the coming of Jesus.
- God the Father so loved us that he sent his Son, Jesus, to be human like us in all things but sin (incarnation).
- Jesus is God-with-us (Immanuel)
- The name Jesus means in Hebrew: 'God saves'
- Jesus fulfils God's promises made in the Old Testament
- Christ means 'Anointed One' (Messiah)
- Mary became the mother of Jesus, through the power of the Holy Spirit (The Feast of the Annunciation)
- God graced Mary in a special way for her mission
- Mary accepted her role in God's plan of salvation when she willingly became the Mother of God.
- Mary was a woman of faith, obedience and wisdom
- Mary grew in her faith
- Mary was totally preserved from the stain of original sin and she remained pure from all personal sin throughout her life (Feast of the Immaculate Conception).

### **WORD OF GOD STRAND**

#### **LEVEL 1**

- Jn 8:12. Jesus, the light of the world.
- Lk 1:26-38. The Annunciation.
- Lk 2:1-20; Mt 1:18-25. Jesus' birth.
- Mt 2:1-3, 7-12. The three wise men.
- Lk 2:22-40. Jesus is presented in the temple.

#### **LEVEL 2**

- Is 9:2. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.
- Mt 1:18-25. Birth of Jesus.
- Mt 2:1-12. Wise men.
- Mt 2:13-16, 19-23. Flight into Egypt/Joseph's dream/return to Nazareth.
- Lk 1:26-38. The Annunciation.
- Lk 1:39-45. The Visitation.
- Lk 2:1-20. Story of Jesus' birth.
- Lk 2:22-40. Presentation: Anna and Simeon.

#### **LEVEL 3**

- Is 9:6-7. Jesus is Saviour.
- Mt 1:18-25. Birth of Jesus.
- Mt 2:1-12. Wise men.
- Lk 1:5-25. Elizabeth and Zechariah.
- Lk 1:26-38. Annunciation.
- Lk 1:39-45. Visitation.
- Lk 2:1-20. Christmas.

#### LEVEL 4

- Is 9:1-7. The people who walked in darkness
- Mt 2:1-11. Epiphany: Jesus' identity revealed.
- Lk 1:26-38. Annunciation.
- Lk 1:5-24; 57-80. Story of Zechariah.
- Lk 2:1-20. Christmas.

### LITURGY AND PRAYER STRAND

#### LEVEL 1

- Advent is a time to get ready to celebrate Jesus' birthday at Christmas. Advent wreath.
- Christmas is a time to celebrate the birth of Jesus.
- Christmas is a time to say thanks to God for sending Jesus to us.
- Christmas is a time when Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the light of the world.
- Special times and places the Church family gathers to pray and celebrate Mass (e.g. Christmas Day).

#### LEVEL 2

- Advent: four weeks of longing to celebrate Christmas, the birthday of Jesus.
- Advent is a time to prepare for the coming of Jesus into the world.
- God prepared for Jesus' coming by sending John the Baptist (Acts 13:24; Mt 3:3;)
- Christmas is a time when Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus, the light of the world (Is 9:2, Is 9:6; Mic 5:1; Jn 8:12)

#### LEVEL 3

- The Liturgical year is celebrated in seasons as follows: Advent, Christmas Season, Ordinary Time, Lent, Easter Season.
- Throughout the liturgical year our Church recognises and celebrates the lives of the martyrs and saints
- The colours of Church vestments used for the Sundays in different seasons of the liturgical year are: Green – Ordinary Time; Violet – Advent and Lent, Sacrament of Reconciliation; Red – Good Friday, Pentecost, Palm Sunday, Confirmation Masses; White – Christmas, Holy Thursday, Easter, Weddings, Baptisms.
- Ordinary time: What and when it is. History (based on the word ordinal refers to the Sundays of the year).
- Advent and Christmas: The Church's seasons of preparing for and celebrating the birthday of Jesus.
- The people of God waited in hope for the coming of God among them.
- The Season of Advent (four weeks) is the beginning of the Church year.
- The Advent Calendar.
- The custom of the crib and the story of the first Crib (St Francis in Greccio).
- Liturgical feasts of Mary (the Feast of Mary, the Mother of God; **Our Lady of Lourdes**; the Annunciation; Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary; the Immaculate Conception) and prayers such as the Rosary express devotion to Mary
- The Feast of the Presentation, the Feast of Epiphany (Holy day of obligation: *Nollaig na mBan*)

#### **LEVEL 4**

- The Magnificat
- The Church, in the course of the year, unfolds the whole mystery of Christ from his birth through his Ascension, to Pentecost and the expectation of the blessed hope of the coming of the Lord'
- Advent and Christmas celebrate God's promise of a Saviour and its fulfilment in Christ, the Messiah
- Advent is a special time of waiting in hope for the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ.
- Advent is a time of waiting for the coming of the Saviour. It is also a preparation for the end of time, when Christ will come again to judge the living and the dead
- The Jesse Tree.
- Christmas is a time to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the Messiah.
- At Christmas God fulfils his promise to send Jesus into our world, to be with us, to bring happiness and peace.
- Jesus is Immanuel (God with us)

### **CHRISTIAN MORALITY**

#### **LEVEL 1**

- I can help people who are poor and people who are hungry.
- Jesus grew in his mother's womb. I grew in my mother's womb.
- Jesus was part of a family. God gave me my family.

#### **LEVEL 2**

- My family is a gift from God.
- Qualities and values of the Holy Family of Nazareth.

#### **LEVEL 3**

- God gives us the gift of peace and we are called to be peacemakers
- God blesses those who care for the poor
- Include: Stories of organisations that care for the poor (GS 88): Trócaire, the Samaritans The Society of St Vincent de Paul, The Society of Missionary Children, etc.

#### **LEVEL 4**

- Every human being has a right to life, food, clothing, and shelter, education, employment, to respect, to appropriate information, to act according to one's own conscience, to privacy and freedom of religion
- A person is more precious for who s/he is than for what s/he has
- Christians do good because it is right and out of love for Jesus
- The Lord asks us to love as he does, to welcome the stranger, and to love children and the poor as Christ himself
- All Christians are called to act for peace and justice in the world
- Life is precious and God-given from the moment of conception to natural death.

