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# ADVENT RESOURCES 2017

Waiting in Joyful Hope

## ADVENT 2017

The Grow in Love programme offers teachers the opportunity to explore the seasons of Advent and Christmas with children at Levels 1, 2 and 3. The lessons contained in these programmes are detailed below. It is important to focus on Advent as the season when we prepare to welcome the best gift of all, the gift of the baby



Jesus, the Christ child, who was sent by God to spread the Good News of God's love and to teach us how to live as members of the family of God. There are also plenty of resources for other Advent activities available on <http://www.kandle.ie/resources/primary-resources/>.

### INFORMAL TEACHING AND LEARNING

Much of the teaching and learning happens informally at this time of year; the teaching of Christmas Carols, making of Advent Wreaths, putting up the crib in the classroom and school Prayer Spaces, Christmas Carol Services, helping local charities such as the Vincent de Paul or Food Kitchens, encouraging the use of Christmas cards and Advent Calendars that have religious themes all serve to help children understand that, for Christians, Christmas is about more than the gifts, food and over-consumption. There are countless ways that our Catholic schools can help counter the way in which Christmas has become a secular feast for so many people. Some of the resources provided this year will endeavour to help teachers to begin to explore this with the children,

#### JUNIOR INFANTS:                      THEME 3:                      ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

- God gives us Good News
- We get ready to welcome Jesus
- The Good News: Jesus is Born
- Visitors to the Stable

#### SENIOR INFANTS:                      THEME 3:                      ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

- Advent Light
- Mary says, 'Yes'
- Jesus is Born
- Gifts for the Baby

#### FIRST CLASS:                              THEME 3:                      ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

- Waiting for the Light
- Jesus is the Light

- The Waiting is over

## SECOND CLASS: THEME 3: ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

- Prepare the Way of the Lord
- Messengers of God
- The Birth of Jesus

## THIRD CLASS: THEME 4: ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

- The Gift of Time
- Mary Visits Elizabeth
- Glory to God in the Highest

## FOURTH CLASS: THEME 4: ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

- Zechariah & Elizabeth
- The Epiphany

## FIFTH & SIXTH CLASSES

As these classes wait for their Grow in Love programme it is useful to look at the Learning Outcomes proposed by the Religious Education Curriculum for the Advent season at Level 4. These outcomes can help teachers decide where to focus their exploration of Advent. The resources provided for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> classes this year will focus on a number of these learning objectives.

### LEVEL 4

#### CHRISTIAN FAITH STRAND

- God the Father so loved us that he sent his Son, Jesus, to be human like us in all things but sin (incarnation).
- Jesus fulfils God's promises made in the Old Testament (DV 7, 15-16; CCC 1093-94).
- Christ means 'Anointed One' (Messiah) (CCC 436, 438, 453).
- Mary became the mother of Jesus, through the power of the Holy Spirit (Lk 1:35; LG 52; CCC 484).
- God graced Mary in a special way for her mission (Lk 1:28; LG 56; CCC 490, 722).
- 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 (CCC 148-49, 273, 494, 511, 721, 967, 2617-19).
- Mary grew in her faith (LG 58).

### WORD OF GOD STRAND

- 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

- 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' (CCC 1153, 1194; Ps 31:14-15).
- Advent and Christmas celebrate God's promise of a Saviour and its fulfilment in Christ, the Messiah (CCC 524).
- 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 (CCC 672, 678).
- The Jesse Tree.

### CHRISTIAN MORALITY

- Our dignity is a gift of God's love and does not depend on race, sex, economic status, human achievement or our place in society.
- Christians respect the fundamental rights of each person (CCC 1944, 2479, 2507, 1782, 2106).
- 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 (GS 26; PT 11-27, 106).
- A person is more precious for who s/he is than for what s/he has (GS 35).

## IMPORTANT DATES IN ADVENT & CHRISTMAS SEASONS 2017-2018

First Sunday of Advent	December 3
Feast of Saint Nicholas	December 6
Second Sunday of Advent	December 10
Feast of the Immaculate Conception	December 8 <i>Holy Day of Obligation</i>
Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe	December 12
Feast of Saint Lucy	December 13
Third Sunday of Advent	December 17 <i>Gaudete Sunday</i>
Fourth Sunday of Advent & Christmas Eve	December 24
Christmas Day	December 25
Feast of St Stephen	December 26
Feast of the Holy Family	December 31
Feast of Mary, the Mother of God	January 1
Feast of the Epiphany	January 6
Feast of the Baptism of the Lord	January 7

# THE ADVENT WREATH: LEVELS 1-4



## FOR THE TEACHER

The Religious Education Curriculum makes specific reference to the Advent wreath at Level 1. However, the wreath can be used to help children of all ages understand the movement through the four weeks of the season of Advent.

Light has always been a symbol of hope in the darkness. We know that the people of the Stone Age built Newgrange in such a way that the light of the rising sun enters the chamber at the darkest time of the year. This was a sign for them that the light was beginning to overcome the darkness. Long before Jesus was born the people of Eastern Europe made wreaths of evergreen branches and added lighted candles as a sign of hope in the dark days of winter. In northern European countries lights were placed on wheels and prayers were offered to the god of light to turn the wheel of the earth back towards the sun.

By the 1500s Christians had adapted this tradition and were using Advent wreaths as part of their preparation for Christmas. They were remembering what Jesus said, *'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.'* (Jn 8:12) By the 17<sup>th</sup> century the Advent wreath was used throughout Germany to mark the time spent waiting for the birth of the Christ child at Christmas. This tradition spread from Germany to the rest of the world.

## THE ADVENT WREATH EXPLAINED

Depending on the age of the children you can use as much or as little as you need of the following explanation to explore the importance and the symbolism of the Advent Wreath.

## A CIRCLE OF EVERGREEN

The wreath is circular in shape to show the everlasting love of God, a love that has no beginning or end. Evergreen leaves such as holly, laurel, ivy, spruce or pine are used also help us to remember that God loves us always. We know that these leaves remain green even through the winter when other leaves have fallen to the ground and died so they are also a reminder of the eternal life promised by God to those who believe in him. The kind of leaves used can also have a meaning that can be related to our faith. Laurel leaves are a traditional sign of victory over persecution and suffering, think of the laurel wreaths or crowns awarded to athletes during the Ancient Olympic Games.

The prickly leaves of the holly can remind us of the crown of thorns worn by Jesus.

#### 4 CANDLES

#### THREE PURPLE AND ONE PINK CANDLE

There is a candle to be lit at the beginning of each of the four weeks of Advent. There is also a tradition that says that each week of Advent represents a thousand years, so that the four weeks add up to the four thousand years from Adam and Eve until the birth of Jesus, the saviour of the world.

There are three purple candles. These remind us that Advent is a time when we are asked to pray and to think about those areas of our lives where we need forgiveness. Purple or violet is the liturgical colour of Advent it is also the colour of repentance in the Church. During Advent people are invited to celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation during parish Penitential Services.

The pink candle is lit on the Third Sunday of Advent which is also called *Gaudete Sunday*. This means Joyful Sunday or the Sunday of Rejoicing. We rejoice because we are more than half way through our preparation for Christmas and the birth of Jesus draws ever closer. On the Third Sunday of Advent the Entrance Antiphon at Mass echoes the theme of rejoicing when it proclaims; *'Rejoice in the Lord always, again I say, rejoice. The Lord is always near.'* (Phil 4:4-5)

It is also suggested that each of the candles have a deeper meaning and this could be explored with the older classes. The following might help:

- On the **1st Sunday of Advent** the candle is called the '*Prophet's Candle*', a sign of hope, reminding us that Jesus is coming.
- On the **2nd Sunday of Advent** we light the '*Bethlehem Candle*', a sign of faith, reminding us of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem.
- On the **3rd Sunday of Advent** we light the '*Shepherd's Candle*', a sign of joy, reminding us of the joy that the birth of Jesus will bring.
- On the **4th Sunday of Advent** we light the '*Angel's Candle*', the sign of peace, reminding us of the message of the angels which we pray during the Gloria: *'Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to people of good will.'*



## CLASSROOM RESOURCES

The following are suggestions for helping the children understand the Advent wreath and the way it helps us to prepare for the birth of Jesus at Christmas.

**ALL CLASSROOM TEACHERS:** There are lots of different ways of making an Advent wreath and many of these can be found in previous Advent Resources; [www.kandle.ie/resources/primary-resources/](http://www.kandle.ie/resources/primary-resources/). The following are some new ideas that might also integrate with the art curriculum.

**1:** This simple Advent Wreath could be made by individual children and brought home



to help create an Advent Space reminding the whole family of the importance of this season as a time to prepare for the birth of Jesus.

You Will Need:

- Scissors
- 3 green pipe cleaners
- 2 purple pipe cleaners
- 1 pink pipe cleaner
- 4 yellow buttons

**Step 1:** Connect (by twisting) three green pipe cleaners end to end to make one long stick.

**Step 2:** Wrap the pipe cleaner stick around a pencil or pen tightly and remove it gently. Bring the ends together to make a circle and twist closed.

**Step 3:** To make the candles, cut the purple and pink pipe cleaners in half.

Thread the button on. Holding the button at the centre, fold the pipe cleaner in half, and twist it.

**Step 4:** Connect the candles, by curling their bottoms around one of the coils in the wreath, and then twisting it around itself to hold it in place. Do this tightly so they don't fall over.

Idea from: <http://whenrunningamok.blogspot.ie/2012/11/an-advent-wreath-made-by-kids-for-kids.html>



**2** This looks like a simple and fun activity for the junior classes. You can download the instructions and a template from

[www.sarajcreations.com/2016/12/advent-wreath-rip-art-craft.html](http://www.sarajcreations.com/2016/12/advent-wreath-rip-art-craft.html)

**3:** Another bright and simple idea for making your classroom an Advent space. The instructions for this can be found on <https://kindercraze.com/stained-glass-window-craft-christmas/> although, it seems self-explanatory from the image.



## A BLESSING FOR THE ADVENT WREATH

*Once you have made Advent Wreaths consider inviting your chaplain to come and bless them. The following short Prayer Service could take place in individual classrooms or at an assembly where all the Advent Wreaths for classrooms and the school Prayer Space are blessed together.*



*Use appropriate music for this short Prayer time. (Advent Song; Grow in Love Senior Infants, First Class, Reflective Music; (All classes) Prepare Ye (Grow in Love Second Class) O Come, O Come Emmanuel, (Grow in Love Fourth Class)*

### INTRODUCTION

This week we begin the Season of Advent. We have all been making Advent Wreaths for our Prayer Spaces and we know that the next four weeks is a time for getting ready, for waiting and for hope. We are all waiting and hoping for lots of things to happen at Christmas, but, Advent reminds us that the most important thing that happens at Christmas is that Jesus is born in Bethlehem.

*Let us listen to the Gospel of St John:* (Jn 8:12)

Jesus spoke to the Pharisees again. "I am the light of the world," he said. "Whoever follows me will have the light of life and will never walk in darkness."

### THE ADVENT WREATH

This is the darkest time of the year; the nights are long and the days are short. The green of the Advent Wreath and the light of these candles remind us that the one for whom we wait brings light to the darkness. We know that Jesus is the light of the world and we wait with joyful hope for his coming at Christmas.

### LET US PRAY

Loving God, we ask you to bless this wreath.

May it remind us always of the coming of Jesus at Christmas

As the light from the candles on this wreath increase,

so may the light of Christ grow  
stronger and brighter in our hearts.  
May the blessing of Christ come upon us,  
brightening our way and guiding us by his truth.  
May Christ our Saviour bring life into the darkness of our world,  
and to us, as we wait for his coming.  
We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen



*Invite the youngest child in the school to light the first purple candle*

#### LET US PRAY

Lord God, we light this candle to thank you for your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ, who is the light of the world.  
We who have sat in darkness have seen a great light,  
the light of Jesus Christ, our salvation.  
We give you thanks and praise in Jesus' name,  
because he lives and reigns with you in your glory,  
and in the unity of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we pray:*  
**Our Father, who art in heaven....**

#### LET US PRAY

God our Father, our school community  
has begun our Advent preparation.  
Be with us as we learn more about this holy time of year.  
May we watch in prayer,  
may we listen in hope,  
may our hearts be filled with wonder  
and may we praise you always.  
We ask this and all our prayers through Christ, our Lord. Amen

# SAINTS & FEAST DAYS IN ADVENT



## FEAST OF ST NICHOLAS

DECEMBER 6

- St Nicholas was born in the third century in Patara, Turkey
- His parents died when he was very young and he inherited a lot of money which he gave away to the needy and the sick
- He dedicated his life to serving God and even went to prison for his faith
- He was made bishop of Myra while still a young man
- His feast day is December 6
- December 6 is still a very important gift-giving day in most of Europe.
- The true story of Santa Claus begins with St Nicholas



You can learn more about St Nicholas at [www.stnicholascentre.org](http://www.stnicholascentre.org).

There are lots of traditions and customs associated with St Nicholas around the world. Find out more about them here: <http://www.stnicholascenter.org/pages/around-the-world/>

## A NEW TRADITION:

### FROM THE CURRICULUM

- Our dignity is a gift of God's love and does not depend on race, sex, economic status, human achievement or our place in society.
- Christians respect the fundamental rights of each person (CCC 1944, 2479, 2507, 1782, 2106).
- 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 (GS 26; PT 11-27, 106).
- A person is more precious for who s/he is than for what s/he has (GS 35).

### THE GIFT BOX

Consider starting a new tradition on the Feast of St Nicholas by inviting the children to bring something to school to place in a Gift Box for those who have very little at Christmas. Liaise with the local St Vincent de Paul or Food Kitchen to see what items are most needed. The suggestions on the Reverse Advent Calendar (From St Mary's Diocesan School, Drogheda, Co Louth) on the next page might help. There is a blank template on page 16. Each child could choose a date and bring the item marked on that date. If the whole school got involved items could be packed into hampers or boxes to be distributed by Vincent de Paul on December 8

as a way to celebrate a Feast Day of Mary and a Holy Day of Obligation. In this way, the children are being helped to realise that Christmas is about more than receiving and are learning that to be like Jesus is to reach out and help those who are in need. The children preparing for Confirmation might lead this activity, visiting classrooms to distribute the reverse Advent Calendars, explaining what is needed and helping to supervise the putting together of the hampers on December 8.



## **REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR**

### **CHRISTMAS FOOD DRIVE FOR ST VINCENT DE PAUL AND FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF THE RENEWAL**

Why a Reverse Advent Calendar? Because instead of taking a treat from a box, each day you add an item to a box, and at the end donate the box to The Foodbank. This will provide food for families, in Drogheda, that are in crisis over the Christmas period.

<b>DAY 1</b> TIN OF BAKED BEANS	<b>DAY 2</b> CARTON OF FRUIT JUICE	<b>DAY 3</b> CRACKERS	<b>DAY 4</b> PASTA
<b>DAY 5</b> TIN OF SWEETCORN	<b>DAY 6</b> BISCUITS	<b>DAY 7</b> TIN OF FRUIT	<b>DAY 8</b> TIN OF PEAS
<b>DAY 9</b> TIN OF SALMON	<b>DAY 10</b> BAG OF RICE	<b>DAY 11</b> TEABAGS	<b>DAY 12</b> JAM
<b>DAY 13</b> COOKING OIL	<b>DAY 14</b> CEREAL	<b>DAY 15</b> TIN OF TOMATOES	<b>DAY 16</b> PASSATA
<b>DAY 17</b> BAG OF SUGAR	<b>DAY 18</b> TIN OF TUNA	<b>DAY 19</b> JAR OF COFFEE	<b>DAY 20</b> NON PERISHABLE DESSERTS
<b>DAY 21</b> TIN OF CARROTS	<b>DAY 22</b> MINCE PIES	<b>DAY 23</b> SELECTION BOX	<b>DAY 24</b> XMAS PUDDING/CAKE

All Reverse Advent boxes can be dropped to Ms Mhic Cionnaith, Ms Hickey or Ms Curtis by Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> December to be distributed between both charities for families in need.



## OUR REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8
Day 9	Day 10	Day 11	Day 12
Day 13	Day 14	Day 15	Day 16
Day 17	Day 18	Day 19	Day 20
Day 21	Day 22	Day 23	Day 24

## MARY IN ADVENT LEVEL 4

### THE FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

- God graced Mary in a special way for her mission (Lk 1:28; LG 56; CCC 490, 722).

On **December 8**, the Church celebrates one of the most important feasts of Our Lady, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This is the day when we remember and celebrate that God chose Mary to be the Mother of Jesus from the very first moment of her being, the moment of her conception. Mary was born without sin and the Church tells us that Mary never sinned throughout her life. God kept her free from sin. In this way God gave Mary the grace that she needed for her mission to be the Mother of God.

Tradition tells us that Mary's parents were called Joachim and Anne although this is not mentioned in the bible. May and October are the months during which the Church honours Mary in a special way. Mary has many titles. She is called Mother of God, Queen of Heaven, Star of the Sea, Queen of Peace, Holy Mother, Blessed Virgin Mary, among many others.

### HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION.

The feast of the Immaculate Conception is one of the special days during the year that we are asked to go to Mass, no matter what day of the week it is. We call these special days Holy Days of Obligation.

### FEASTS OF MARY:

The Church has many other days on which we celebrate Mary and how important she is. Take some time to revise these feasts with the children and recall what they already know about the events that we celebrate on some of these days: The Feast of the Assumption, the Annunciation, the Immaculate Conception, Birth of the Blessed Virgin, Mary the Mother of God, Our Lady of the Rosary, Our Lady of Guadalupe and Our Lady of Lourdes.

You might also like to revise some of the prayers that we associate with Mary. Consider praying the Angelus at 12: noon during Advent and encouraging the children to lead this prayer. Teach the Hail Holy Queen if the children do not already know it. Revise or teach the Glorious Mysteries and the Mysteries of Light.

The activity on the next page can be used to consolidate learning.

## MATCH THE FEAST DAY WITH THE CORRECT DATE

The Feast of the Assumption

The Feast of the  
Annunciation

The Feast of the Immaculate  
Conception

The Birth of the Blessed  
Virgin

Mary the Mother of God

Our Lady of the Rosary

Our Lady of Guadalupe

Our Lady of Lourdes

March 25

October 7

January 1

August 15

December 13

February 11

December 8

September 8

## MARY'S SPECIAL PRAYERS

Unscramble the following to find prayers that we pray to Mary.

Choose one of the prayers and write it out in your religion copy:

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eth orsray

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ilah

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alih

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army

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olhy

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ueneq

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## OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

*On this feast day we celebrate Mary appearing to a man named Juan Diego on Tepyac Hill in Mexico City.*



Juan Diego was on his way to Mass early one morning when Our Lady appeared to him as he was making his way down Tepyac Hill. Mary appeared like an Aztec princess and asked Juan to go to the bishop and tell him she wanted a great church built on the spot where she was standing. Juan Diego went to the bishop, who, of course, did not believe his story. He told Juan to ask the Lady for a sign the next time he saw her so that the story could be proven. Juan was unsure. He didn't know if the lady would ever appear to him again.

In the early morning on December 12th, Juan Diego was walking along the the hill. His uncle was dying and he was going to get the priest. Juan had no time to waste and did not want to meet the lady so he took another route. But Mary appeared again to Juan and told him that his uncle was better. In fact, Juan found out a little later that Our Lady had, for a moment, appeared to his uncle and that he was immediately cured. The lady asked Juan to return to the bishop. Juan remembered the bishop's request for proof and asked Mary for a sign. Mary sent Juan to the rocky area nearby and told him to gather the roses that were there.

Juan was confused. He knew there were no roses. It was winter, there was snow on the ground, and the bushes were bare. But Juan did as he was told and there, just as Mary had said were the most beautiful roses. Excited, Juan picked the roses and wrapped them in his *tilma* or cloak and rushed to show the bishop. As Juan arrived at the bishops house he dropped the roses from the cloak and there in the *tilma* where the roses had been was a picture of the beautiful lady who had appeared to Juan. It was life-size and glowing. The bishop had received his sign and Mary would have her church. Today a great Basilca, stands where Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared. Inside hangs Juan Diego's cloak with the image of Mary on it. Our Lady of Guadalupe was named patroness of Mexico and is also patroness of Latin America and the Philippines.

## DISCUSSION

- What do we know about Mary?
- What images/ pictures of Mary have you seen?
- Can you remember any stories about Mary from the bible?
- Have you ever heard of the Apparitions of Mary? (Lourdes, Knock, Fatima....)
- What prayers do we say to Mary?
- Why do you think that Mary is so important to our faith?

There are many different images of Mary. The Aztec Princess who appeared to Juan Diego was one such image of Mary. We see Mary pictured as Our Lady of Lourdes, Our Lady of Knock, Our Lady of Fatima. At this time of year we seem many images of Mary as Mother of Jesus.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Our Lady of Guadalupe (1531) appeared to Juan Diego wearing a gown of rose and a cloak of blue with gold stars.
- Our Lady of Lourdes (1858) appeared to Bernadette wearing a simple gown and a cloak of white with a blue sash.
- Our Lady of Knock (1879) appeared wearing a cloak of white and a crown of gold.
- Our Lady of Fatima (1917) appeared to the children wearing a gown and cloak of white with gold trim and a crown.

### **MARY IS ALMOST ALWAYS PICTURED WEARING BLUE. WHY?**

Have you noticed that whenever you see pictures, paintings, statues or icons of Mary she is almost always wearing blue.

Blue is a colour that is associated with royalty, peace and nature. When you think that we call Mary the Queen of heaven and earth it probably makes sense that she is usually depicted wearing blue.

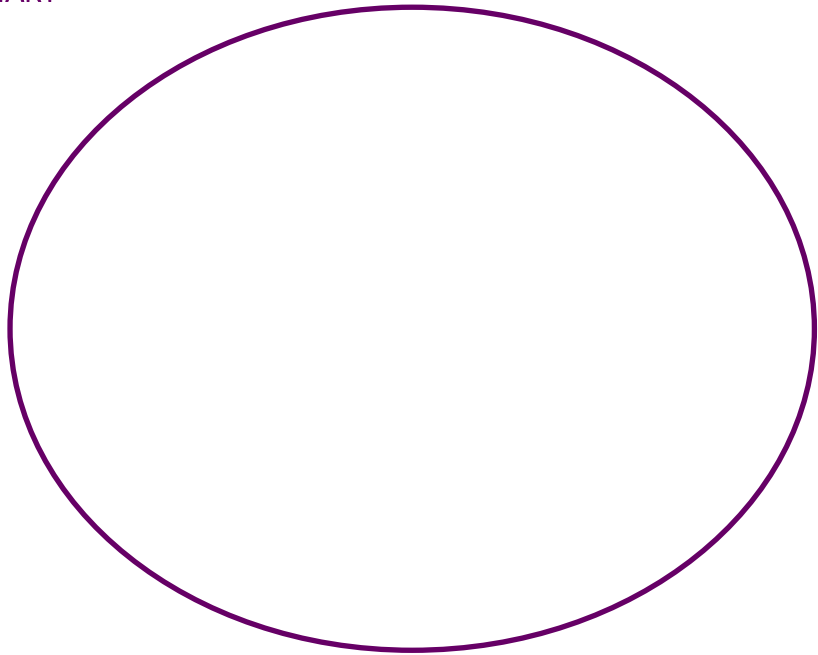
Look at the images of Mary below:

In pairs find

- 3 differences and 3 similarities in the images



## DRAW YOUR IMAGE OF MARY



## TITLES FOR MARY

We have seen that there are many different images of Our Lady. Mary is also called by many other names. She is often referred to as Mother, Our Lady or Queen. Some of the titles come from the many places where Mary has appeared. These titles remind us how important Mary is. Mary is the Mother of Jesus but she is also our Mother. When we pray to Mary we can ask for her help and through her become closer to Jesus. [These are some titles given to Mary:](#)

Mother of God

Queen of Heaven

Our Lady of Lourdes

Our lady of Guadalupe

Our Lady of Knock

Our Lady of Fatima

Blessed Mother

Mother of the Church

Star of the sea

Madonna

Blessed Virgin

Our Lady of the Rosary

Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Holy Mary

Mother of Christ

### CHECK IT OUT!

Research some of the different titles for Mary. Write about where these titles come from and share them with your class.

- This beloved saint was born in 283 AD and lived in Syracuse, Sicily. She was the daughter of rich parents and her father died when she was very young.
- She was a Christian and wanted to spend her life spreading the Good News, so she secretly promised Jesus that she would never marry.
- Her mother, Eutychia, begged her to marry a young pagan named Paschasius, whom she had chosen for Lucy. But, for three years, Lucy would not agree.
- Lucy then thought of a plan to win her mother over. Her mother was often sick and Lucy convinced her to go to the shrine of St Agatha and pray for her recovery.
- When God heard their prayers and cured her mother, Lucy told her of her promise not to get married. Her grateful mother finally agreed.
- Paschasius was furious at losing his bride-to-be. In his bitter anger, he accused her of being a Christian. He threatened her with the frightening torture of being blinded.
- But Lucy was even willing to lose both her eyes rather than belong to anyone but Jesus. And that is just what happened. Many statues show St Lucy holding her lovely eyes in the palm of her hand.
- Jesus rewarded Lucy for her heroic love. He worked a miracle and gave her back her eyes, more beautiful than ever.
- Paschasius tried lots of things to get Lucy to turn her back on Jesus. Eventually, she was sentenced to death for being a Christian. She was surrounded with bundles of wood which they set on fire, but the fire went out. In the end, she was killed and became a martyr in the year 304.
- The name, Lucy, means Light. Many people pray to St Lucy when they have eye problems.
- The names, Lucy, Lucia, Lucette, and Dawn all come from the Latin word, *'lux'*, which means light.
- St Lucy's day is still celebrated in many parts of the world. In Sweden, Denmark, Finland, and Norway, it is the job of the eldest child to dress up and play the part of St Lucy in a procession, where she will wear a crown of candles on her head.
- St Lucy always kept the light of Christ alive.



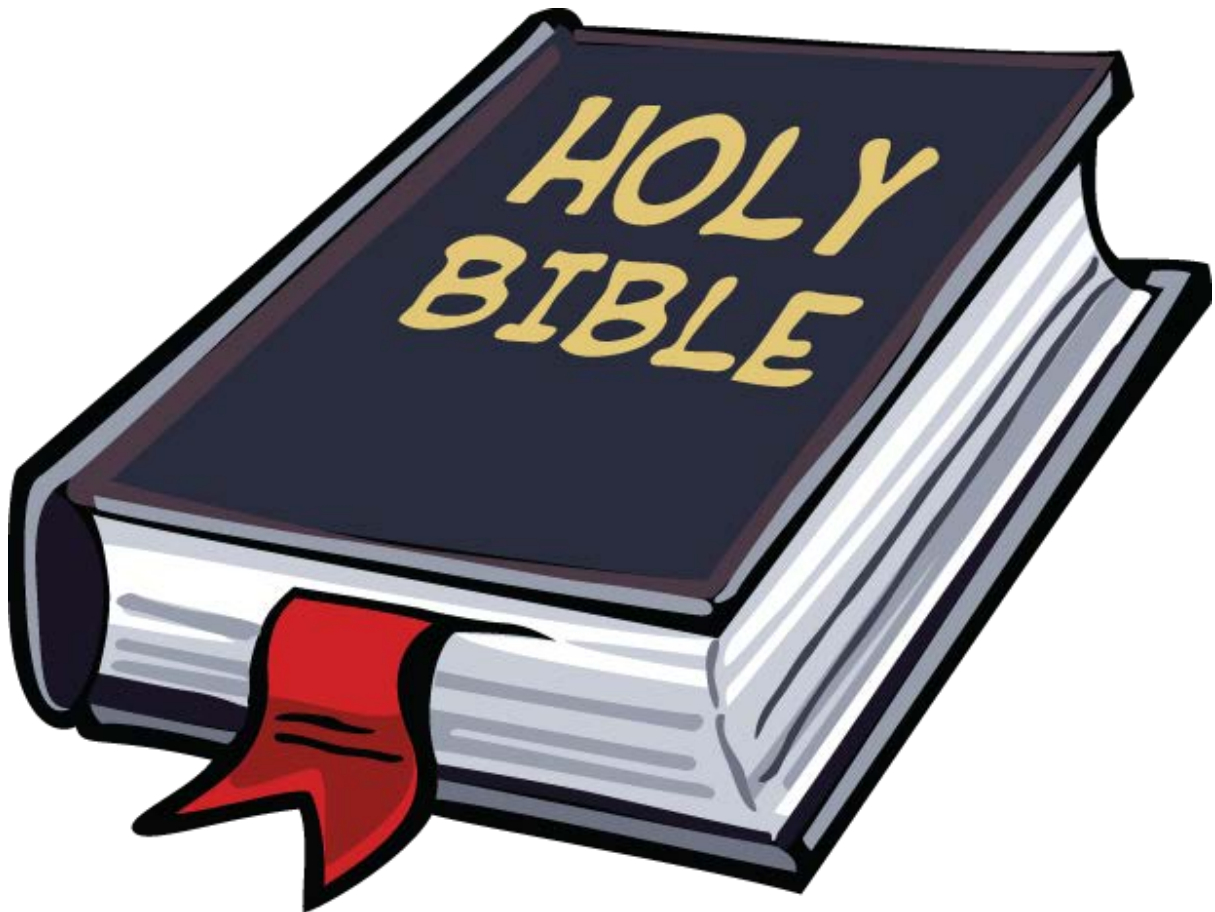


### FOR YOU TO DO

- Write the story of St Lucy in your own words
- Find out how St Lucy's Day is celebrated in other countries
- Find out about the special food that is associated with St Lucy in Sweden and Italy
- Write a prayer to St Lucy



# The Gospels of Advent



## The First Sunday of Advent



Mark 13:33-37

Jesus said to his disciples, 'Be on your guard, stay awake, because you never know when the time will come. It is like a man travelling abroad: he

has gone from home, and left his servants in charge, each with his own task; and he has told the doorkeeper to stay awake. So, stay awake, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming, evening, midnight, cockcrow, dawn; if he comes unexpectedly, he must not find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake!’

This Gospel is reminding us that we must always be ready to meet Jesus, because we never know when he will come again. We can’t stay awake all the time, but we can make sure that we are living our lives as best we can, that we are trying to be as Jesus would want us to be.

Responsible	Just	Lazy	Loving	Stubborn
Peaceful	Happy	Deceitful	Giving	Selfish
Forgiving	Jealous	Bullying	Joyful	Prayerful
Annoying	Caring	Thoughtful	Patient	Helpful

### To Do

Choose the words from the list above that describe you trying to be the best that you can be. Put each word into a sentence that shows how you will try to act during Advent as you wait for Jesus.

### PRAY:

Lord help us to wait for you this Advent by being the very best people we can be, by helping others and spending time with you. We make this prayer in your name. Amen

### The Second Sunday of Advent

In the Gospel in the second week of Advent, we hear about John the Baptist whose job was to help people to turn back to God, and to prepare the way for Jesus. John the Baptist was a prophet and he was Jesus’ cousin.



Read about this in Mark 1:1-8. Then use the Word Bank to fill in the blanks in the following story:

The prophet \_ \_ \_ \_ told us, in the Old Testament, about the person who would tell the people of Israel to get ready to welcome Jesus Christ, the \_ \_ \_ of \_ \_ \_ . Isaiah wrote that God would send a \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ to get the way ready. So \_ \_ \_ \_ the \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ appeared in the \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ . He wore clothes made of \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ . He had a belt made of \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ around his waist. He ate \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ and wild \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ . He had a very important message for the people of \_ \_ \_ . He told them that they must change the way they \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ their lives and turn \_ \_ \_ \_ to God.

Crowds of people from Judea and \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ came to see John. They told him how sorry they were for their \_ \_ \_ \_ . He \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ them in the River \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ . John the \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ also had another message for the people. He told them that there was someone else coming and that John was not \_ \_ \_ to untie his \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ . The person who was still to come would baptise with the \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ . This person was \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ .

**WORD BANK:**

Son; baptised; Holy Spirit; Jesus; leather; Isaiah; camel hair; fit; Jordan; God; John; Israel; Jerusalem; locusts; Baptist; sandals; honey; messenger; desert; sins; back; lived

**PRAY:** Lord give us the courage to be like John the Baptist who showed people how to follow you by the way he lived his life. We make this prayer in your name. Amen



## The Third Sunday of Advent

This Sunday has another name. It is called *Gaudete Sunday* which means rejoice or joyful Sunday. The candle on the Advent wreath is a rose pink colour to show that we are more than half way in our Advent journey to Christmas. In earlier times, Advent was a time of fasting and penance like the season of Lent. The third Sunday was a time for a break in the fast, when people could celebrate a little in anticipation of Christmas.

In the Gospel for this Sunday, we hear again about John the Baptist, the messenger sent by God to tell people about Jesus. John the Baptist was not the light; he came to tell about the light. The light is another way of talking about Jesus. The people wondered who John really was. He was asked this question many times. The people had been promised a Messiah by God and they wondered whether John was this person. You can read the Gospel in your class Bible by finding the following reference: **John 1:6-8, 19-28**.

### TITLES FOR JESUS

In today's Gospel, we hear the people talking about the Messiah. This means the '*anointed One*', the Saviour promised by God. Messiah is just one of many titles given to Jesus. The name given to Jesus at birth is probably the Hebrew name *Yeshua* or *Joshua*. It means 'God saves'. The people of Ancient Israel did not have last names. They were often referred to by the place they came from or the job they or their families did. So, we have Jesus called, Jesus the Nazarene or 'the carpenter's son.' There are many titles given to Jesus in the New Testament. You will find some of them in the Word Search on the next page. When you have found all the words choose one title and find out some more about it. Write a short report on what you have found out in your Religion copy.

**PRAY:** Lord, help us to wait in joyful hope for the Messiah, Jesus Christ, who is born at Christmas. We make this prayer in your name. Amen

See how many Titles for Jesus that you can find in the Word Search

T K Z H G D P K K L B P O T A A C C M J  
 B O B M X I T S I R H C B E G H S A P P  
 T B S Z R M L E U N A M M E Z O H Q R M  
 Y L D S M K U O J Y G W M Y N K E O H R  
 L Q Y Z Z D I V A D F O N O S S P R Z J  
 O R X I V V P B O D A V F J L H H D Q S  
 J R H H A M F G K H X M V T E T E D B O  
 J C S S H J F T P G A K B T H Z R W Y L  
 X Y I O T O A L O R D X W O G E D L D U  
 N N L N N N A U Y S I Z L N N X J I L B  
 I W B O M M I V A K J Y R Z G A M E H G  
 N B S F B N U D Y L O D I Y T D R D W U  
 N I B M C N V X B N Z T U V O J X U B S  
 B N E A M I K T E K B F O J Y E C X F W  
 M H P N R O G W L I Z R I Z L D O T A B  
 H N D W R D E G H F N V W U Y D G S D B  
 P W L B U V F G F V T F Q V G J L Y L J  
 C D P A X X C E T S U A P D Y S S R E Y  
 L L A B G O H L T K A U H F N B R Z Q J  
 Y U L I V Z B R X U N S Q K L P A B J K



ALPHA OMEGA	CHRIST	EMMANUEL	HOLY ONE
KING OF THE JEWS	LAMB	LORD	PROPHET
RABBI	SAVIOUR	SHEPHERD	SON OF DAVID
SON OF GOD	SON OF MAN	SON OF MARY	

## The Fourth Sunday of Advent



This week's gospel is from Luke 1:26-38 and tells the story of the Annunciation which celebrates the announcement of the Angel Gabriel to Mary that she was to become the Mother of Jesus, the Son of God. Read the story in your Bible; unscramble the words below and put each one in a sentence that shows you have understood the story of the Annunciation.

**bGlrlea:** The word is \_\_\_\_\_

My sentence:

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**razhetNa:** The word is \_\_\_\_\_

My sentence:

---

**rfauov:** The word is \_\_\_\_\_

My sentence:

---

**spJoeh:** The word is \_\_\_\_\_

My sentence:

---

**Isopsiemi:** The word is \_\_\_\_\_

My sentence:

---

**aDvid:** The word is \_\_\_\_\_

My sentence:

---

**erltavie:** The word is \_\_\_\_\_

My sentence:

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**PRAY:** Lord, help us to be able to live as Mary did and always do what you ask. We make this prayer in your name. Amen