

LITURGICAL SUGGESTIONS
FOR THE SUNDAYS OF ADVENT 2021



*Welcoming the gifts of HOPE, PEACE, JOY and LOVE
that Jesus brings into our hearts and lives this Advent*

From the Kildare and Leighlin

Diocesan Commission for Liturgical Formation

& Faith Development Services



LITURGICAL ACTION AND SUPPORTING TEXTS OFFERED:

Placing a Petition Box of Hope/Peace/Joy/Love each week into the liturgical space

- Each week a gift-wrapped petition box with an open slit on the top and with the word **HOPE** (week one) **PEACE** (week two) **JOY** (week three) or **LOVE** (week four) in large print on the side, is added either at the foot of the advent wreath or in another prepared sacred space. There will, thus, be four petition boxes in the sacred space at the end of Advent.
- This can be done as part of the lighting of the Advent wreath, as modelled in these resources, or at another suitable time in the Mass.
- The sacred space can be prepared with a purple cloth. A table with cloth, pens, slips of paper and hand sanitizer can be placed close by for people to write on each week and put in the appropriate box.
- The gift box can be placed each week by different members of the congregation, eg. a family, a child, an older person, a young person, a single person or a married couple.
- Parishioners are invited to add their intentions to the box during the week. On Christmas Eve all four boxes can be placed in the crib scene for the intentions to be prayed for at Christmas Masses.

- Texts for use in the the **Penitential Act, Prayer of the Faithful** and **Final Solemn Blessing** are offered for use, as well as a script for the **placing of the box** which links it to the **lighting of the wreath. These texts in turn draw on hope, peace, joy & love. Any or all of these can be adapted locally.**

- A **Communion Reflection** is also being offered in script form for reading or in video form for use where this is possible. This video can be shared on social media.

- **Bambinelli Blessing** A blessing for the figurine of the infant Jesus from the Family crib is offered for the Third Sunday of Advent with an advance announcement provided for the Second Sunday.

First Sunday of Advent:

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Second Sunday of Advent:

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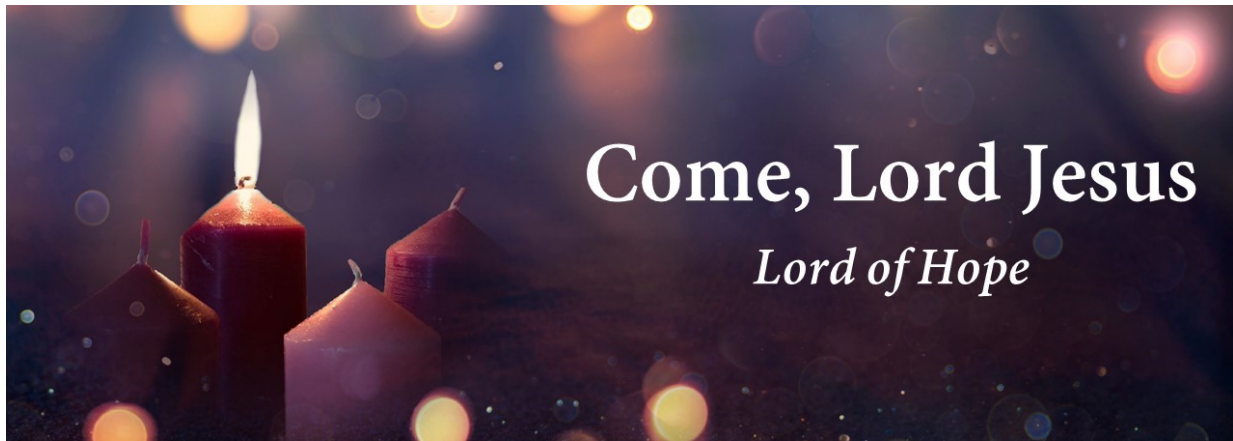
Third Sunday of Advent:

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Fourth Sunday of Advent:

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First Sunday of Advent



Note: This season might be a good time to re-introduce the use of incense and appropriately trained altar servers into the Mass

Blessing of Advent Wreath

A simple procession or one that includes the following could be used:

Incense - cross with candle bearers - an unlit Advent candle and the first petition box of HOPE,

while one of the Advent hymns is sung; then begin the Eucharist at the wreath.

After the normal greeting the priest continues:

Dear Friends,

today we begin the season of Advent. We open our hearts to God's love as we prepare to welcome Christ into our lives and homes. The candles of this wreath remind us that Jesus came to conquer the darkness of sin and to lead us into the light of his glorious kingdom.

And so, we pray:

Almighty God,

We ask you in prayer to bless + this Advent Wreath and make it holy.

As we begin this day to recall

how your Son's coming was proclaimed by all the prophets;

how the virgin mother bore him in her womb with love beyond all telling;

and how John the Baptist was his herald and made him known when at last he came,

grant that this time of preparation will increase our faith and our holiness.

May it give us new strength to follow in your Son's way.

We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Maranatha, Come, Lord Jesus!

Priest incenses the wreath.

Then a reader continues:

Introduction to lighting of wreath and placing of box of HOPE: (Sample text)

Reader: 'Maranatha - Come, Lord Jesus'. This is the traditional prayer of Advent. The prayer is a cry to Jesus to come into our lives and into our hearts.

To pray 'Come, Lord Jesus' is to recognise that despite all that the world might seem to offer, it is Jesus who is the Lord of hope, peace, joy and love. As we journey through the Advent season let us take these weeks to turn to Jesus and to welcome Him into our lives bringing his gifts of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love.

As we light the first candle of our Advent wreath and begin to dispel the darkness of the world, we also will bring forward a petition box of HOPE. This Advent we open up to Jesus all those areas of our lives where we need to let in hope, placing before Him our anxieties and worries, our cares and concerns...those places in our homes and hearts in need of the gift of hope that comes from Jesus alone. In the coming week you are invited to add your petitions of hope for yourself, your family, our community and our world into the box of HOPE.

[Candle is lit first; then the box of HOPE is placed]

As the candle is lit and the box of HOPE is placed, any of the following might be used at this point

- Come Lord Jesus Sung <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HzEHRoG4iLk> (see link for this simple refrain that could be sung accapella) or
- O Come, O Come Emmanuel instrumental
- An alternative music suggestion might be music and the refrain from 'My Soul in Stillness Waits' - in the Gather Hymnal (especially suitable for week 1 & 2).
- Spoken response: *Come, Lord Jesus! Lord of Hope, Come and be born in our hearts.*

Penitential Act

Lord Jesus, you come to bring hope to all people. Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you bring light to those in darkness. Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you show us the way to the Father. Lord, have mercy.

Prayer of the Faithful

The following could be used for the invitation to pray and response for each intention:

'We pray to the Lord of Hope' – Lord, hear our prayer.

Particular prayers for people suffering from depression and anxiety, people coping with seemingly impossible situations and hardship...could be included this week.

Communion Reflection

Let us begin our advent with a sense of hope. Our hope is in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, Our Saviour, Our God, the one who is Love itself. So let us begin this journey by preparing our hearts to meet Jesus in a truer, deeper way; not just for Christmas: Let us prepare ourselves to meet the Lord face-to-face; let us prepare for eternity.

This world is fleeting. In these times especially, we are reminded far too much of sickness and death around us. As Christians we do not need to fear, remember the Lord's promises: "For God so loved the world that he gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).

Let us believe in the mercy and goodness of our God who forgives us when we stray. Let us use this time of Advent to humble ourselves before our loving Father. Let us not be afraid to bring our guilt and shame, our wrongdoing from the past to Jesus in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, so that we no longer need to carry these burdens on our back, these poisons in our hearts, or get caught up in the shame of old.

With God's forgiveness we may move forward with a sense of freedom, liberation, peace and hope in our hearts. Time is a precious gift, let us use it wisely to prepare ourselves to meet LOVE itself. (Michelle Ward, Diocesan Pastoral Council)

Announcements – (use as locally relevant)

- In the coming week you are invited to place your petitions in our box of HOPE – This box will be placed in our crib scene on Christmas eve when we will pray for all your intentions.
- There are plenty of resources to support you and your family on your Advent journey on our parish website and on the diocesan website, Kandle.ie – including a weekly Advent bulletin for the home and more. You might take a moment to look at them and use them during the week. Don't forget to follow us on our parish and diocesan Facebook and twitter pages to get up to date resources during this season of Advent.
- Our popular Advent Scripture Sharing resources are available on the diocesan website [and continues in person/on zoom here in the parish on (.....) and you are very welcome to join us.].

Solemn Blessing

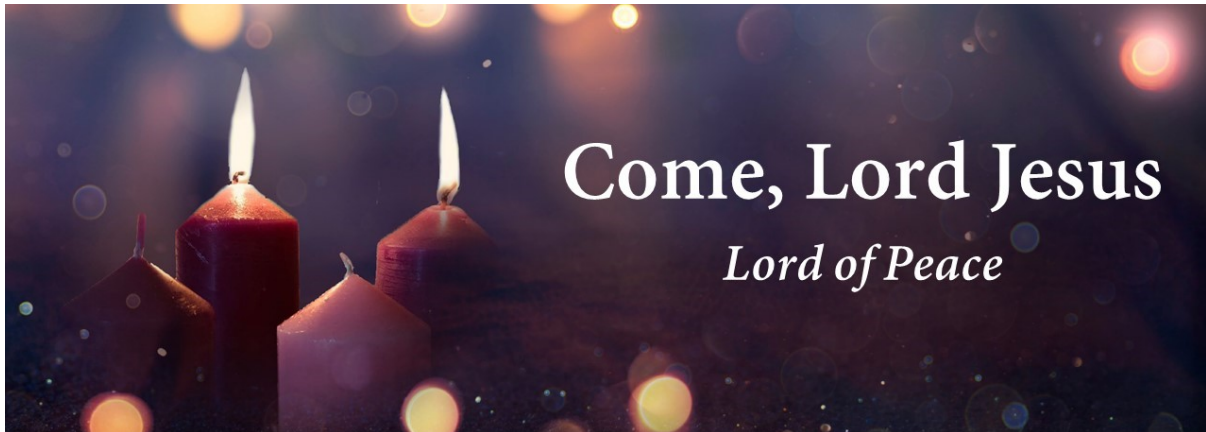
God has called you out of darkness to be people of light and hope.

May the God of Hope bless you by the light of Christ's coming and enrich your lives with every grace. **Amen.**

May God make your hope a comfort to all who long for justice as we await the coming of our Saviour. **Amen**

May God reward you with eternal life when our redeemer comes again in majesty. **Amen.**
And may almighty God bless you...

Second Sunday of Advent



Opening procession

The box of PEACE can be included in the opening procession as last week.

Introduction to lighting of wreath and placing of box of PEACE: (Sample text)

Reader: 'Maranatha - Come, Lord Jesus'. We continue to pray this traditional prayer of Advent. The prayer is a cry to Jesus to come into our lives and into our hearts.

To pray 'Come, Lord Jesus' is to recognise that despite all that the world might seem to offer, it is Jesus who is the Lord of hope, peace, joy and love. As we journey through the Advent season let us take this time to turn to Jesus and to welcome Him into our lives bringing his gifts of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love.

As we light the second candle of our Advent wreath and seek to dispel the darkness of the world, we will also bring forward our petition box of PEACE. This Advent we open up to Jesus all those areas of our lives where we need to let in His peace, placing before Him those places and relationships in our lives that are broken and in need of healing...those places in our homes and hearts in need of the gift of peace that comes from Jesus alone.

[Candle is lit first; then the box of PEACE is placed]

As the second candle is lit and the box of PEACE is placed, any of the following might be used at this point

- Come Lord Jesus Sung <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HzEHRoG4iIk> (see link for this simple refrain that could be sung accapella) or
- O Come, O Come Emmanuel instrumental
- An alternative music suggestion might be music and the refrain from 'My Soul in Stillness Waits' - in the Gather Hymnal (especially suitable for week 1 & 2).
- Spoken response: *Come, Lord Jesus! Lord of Peace, Come and be born in our hearts.*

Penitential Act

Lord Jesus, you came to show us the ways of peace. Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you heal the wounds of sin and division. Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are the Prince of Peace, bringing light to those in darkness. Lord, have mercy.

Prayer of the Faithful

The following could be used for the invitation to pray and response for each intention:

'We pray to the Lord of Peace' – Lord, hear our prayer.

Particular prayers for areas of conflict and war, displaced people, families in need of reconciliation and people cut off from reaching their full potential because of injustice and poverty could be included this week.

Communion Reflection

John the Baptist, a prophet living in the desert showed us that a person wearing simple clothes and eating simple food can do special work for God and be special to God.

At times, our world can be imagined as living in a desert. An immense space of possibilities and opportunities, but without faith, those moments can slip through our fingers like sand.

On this Advent day, John the Baptist calls out to us from the wilderness of a desert. He calls out to you and me:*prepare a way for the Lord, make straight paths for him...*

In our world of uncertainty and confusion, his call is simple and clear, pointing all of us, - back to Jesus.

On this Advent day, this is our prayer – *Come, Lord Jesus!*

They say: "Be careful what you ask God for.... You just might get it"...On this Advent let's risk and ask for it: it's worth risking

Come, Lord Jesus,

- you who the prophet told us, are the Prince of Peace,
- you who the angels sang at your birth 'Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to people of good will'.

John the Baptist knew it, and deep down in our hearts we know it too – Jesus is the way of peace, Jesus is our shalom.

This Advent, because of Jesus, we can have peace in our hearts – a sense of peace that's not just about an absence of arguments or disagreement but a peace, a shalom that's about wholeness, wellbeing - the completeness that God wants for each of us and that as Christians we want for one another.

On advent days we know that the peace of Christ is already and not yet...

We pray '*Come, Lord Jesus – Lord of Peace*'

John the Baptist calls out '*prepare a way for the Lord, make straight paths for him...*'

I'm left with the question –

what might I have to do to bring Jesus' peace into my life and those I share my life with?

(Julie Kavanagh & Dorel Picovici, Diocesan Pastoral Council)

Announcements – use as locally relevant

- In the coming week you are invited to place your petitions in our box of PEACE – where in life do you or a family member need the peace that Jesus gives? What relationships might need healing and forgiveness, what areas of your life are broken and need the healing touch of Jesus. This box of PEACE will be placed in our crib scene on Christmas eve when we will pray for all your intentions.
- Joining in a tradition from Rome, we are inviting families and households in the parish to bring their figurine of Jesus from the family nativity scene for a special blessing at Mass next Sunday. This blessing, known as the **Blessing of the Bambinelli**, will be given by Pope Francis in St Peter's square next week as well as in churches throughout the world. It would be lovely to see as many families as possible taking part in this lovely tradition as we move closer to the celebration of Christmas.
- There are plenty of resources to support you on your Advent journey, on our parish website and on the diocesan website, Kandle.ie – including a weekly bulletin for the home. You might take a moment to look at them and use them during the week.
- Our popular Advent Scripture Sharing resources are available on the diocesan website [and continues in person/on zoom here in the parish on (.....) and you are very welcome to join us.].

Solemn Blessing

May God the Father, who loved the world so much that he sent his only Son, give you the grace of fullness of life. Amen.

May God the Son, who comes to us as the Prince of Peace, reveal to you the path from brokenness to wholeness, from darkness to light. Amen.

May God the Holy Spirit, by whose working the Virgin Mary conceived Christ, wrap you in the mantle of Christ's peace. Amen.

And may almighty God bless you...

Third Sunday of Advent



Opening procession

The box of JOY can be included in the opening procession as last week.

Introduction to lighting of wreath and placing of box of JOY: (Sample text)

Reader: 'Maranatha - Come, Lord Jesus'. In these Advent days we hear this prayer and are invited to make it our own. The prayer is a cry to Jesus to come into our lives and into our hearts.

To pray 'Come, Lord Jesus' is to recognise that despite all that the world might seem to offer, it is Jesus who is the Lord of hope, peace, joy and love. As we journey through the Advent season let us take this time to turn to Jesus and to welcome Him into our lives bringing his gifts of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love.

On this Rejoice Sunday, we light the third candle of our Advent wreath, dispelling more and more the darkness of the world. As we light this candle we will also bring forward our box of JOY. This Advent we open up our lives to Jesus so that we can let in His joy. As we make our Christmas gift lists and wrap our Christmas presents may we come to discover and hunger for the greatest gift that is waiting for us...the gift of Jesus. Then we will know true joy in our lives – a joy that no earthly possession can ever give us.

[Candle is lit first; then the box of JOY is placed]

As the gift box is placed, any of the following might be used at this point

- Come Lord Jesus Sung <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HzEHRoG4iLk> (see link for this simple refrain that could be sung accapella) or
- O Come, O Come Emmanuel instrumental
- An alternative music suggestion might be music and the refrain from 'My Soul in Stillness Waits' - in the Gather Hymnal (especially suitable for week 1 & 2).
- Spoken response: *Come, Lord Jesus! Lord of Joy, Come and be born in our hearts.*

Penitential Act

Lord Jesus, you came to bring us the good news. Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, with joy you renew us in your love. Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are the one whose coming we long for. Lord, have mercy.

Blessing of the Baminelli

The blessing provides a link into the home in which parents can have a conversation with their children about faith. It presents a wonderful occasion to remind families that, amidst the garland and Christmas trees, the true meaning of Christmas celebration is the Birth of Jesus. It reinforces the message that Christ and the other persons in the Trinity, as well as the Church, loves and welcomes each and every person. The greatest gift we receive at Christmas is the gift of Jesus.

This blessing could take place at the end of the homily or at some other suitable time.

Children (and adults) can be invited to raise up their figurines of Jesus in their place.

Any appropriate blessing may be used, though you may wish to use the blessing (with very slight modification here) that was composed by Pope Benedict XVI for the blessing of the Baminelli in Rome.

Let us pray:

God, our Father you so loved humankind that you sent us your only Son Jesus, born of the Virgin Mary, to save us and lead us back to you.

We pray that, with your blessing, these images of Jesus, soon to come among us,

may be a sign of your presence and love in our homes.

Good Father, give your Blessing to us too, [to our parents,] to our families and to our friends.

Open our hearts, so that we may be able to receive Jesus in joy, always do what he asks and see him in all those who are in need of our love.

I now bless these Baminelli and the children (and adults) who present them in the name of the Father, of the son and of the Holy Spirit.

(Holy water may be used at the time of the blessing).

We ask you this in the name of Jesus, your beloved Son who comes to give the world hope, peace, joy and love, and who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.

Invitation to wrap the blessed figurine:

Families can be invited to gift wrap the blessed figurine when they go home and open it on Christmas eve as the first gift of Christmas before placing it in the family crib scene..

Prayer of the Faithful

The following could be used for the invitation to pray and response for each intention:

‘We pray to the Lord of Joy’ – Lord, hear our prayer.

Particular prayers for those weighed down with depression and those supporting them could be included, for those lost and struggling with addiction...

Communion Reflection – On this third Sunday of Advent, Gaudete Sunday, we ask ourselves ‘What is Joy?’

Joy is here, and it is now but *where does this joy come from?*

Where do you find Joy in your life?

I find Joy in a friend that I can call when I need to talk, in the times when I go for a walk and gaze upon the blue sky and hear the sounds of birds and while I sit at the table with my family, share a meal and we talk, laugh, and enjoy each other’s company.

Joy is powerful. Joy fills us with life, confidence, excitement, love, energy. Joy grounds us, is always with us, sustains us, and provides us with life-giving power.

St. Luke’s Gospel tells us, *For behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all people. (Luke 2:10)* Not just joy to a select few; but to all. Jesus came to this earth for people of every age, background and culture.

Have you been in the presence of someone who radiates this joy? People gravitate to them. They carry an inner peace and confidence whether their environment is calm or chaotic. We want what they have *but how do we access this same inner joy?*

“Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.” (John 16:24)

Could it really be that simple?

When we are open to God, we receive Joy!

Ask yourself: *This week, how can I fill my life with the gift of Joy?*

How can I become more open to allowing God’s joy into my life?

(Nicola Byrne, Parish Team Member, Graiguecullen Killeshin Parish)

Announcements – use as locally relevant

- In the coming week you are invited to place your petitions in our box of JOY – how/ where do you or a loved one need to be lifted up from sadness to joy with Christ? What might you need to write down and let go of to allow the joy of Christ to truly come into your life? The box of JOY will be placed in our crib scene on Christmas eve when we will pray for all your intentions.
- There are plenty of resources to support you on your Advent journey, on our parish website and on the diocesan website, Kandle.ie – including a weekly Advent bulletin for the home. You might take a moment to look at them and use them during the week.
- Our popular Advent Scripture Sharing resources are available on the diocesan website [and continues in person/on zoom here in the parish onand you are very welcome to join us..].

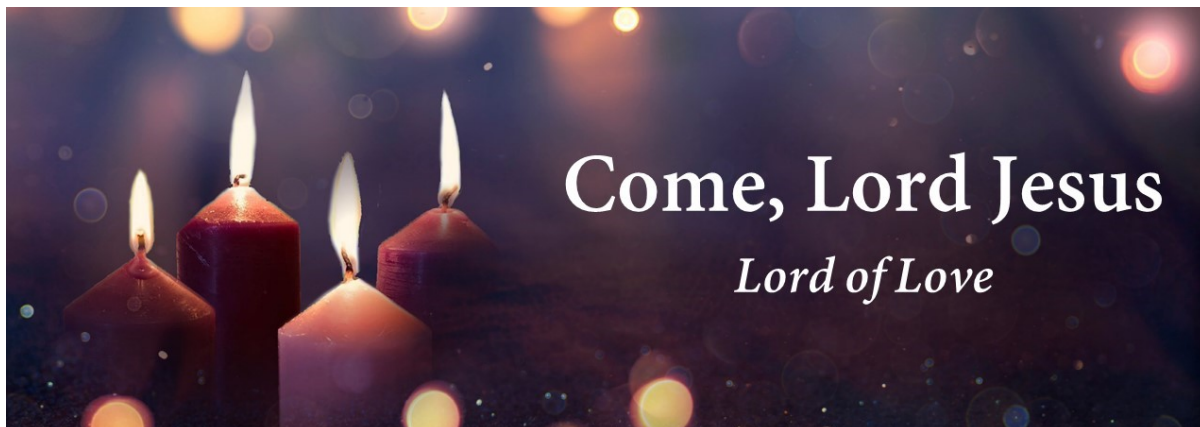
Solemn Blessing

May God the Father, who loved the world so much that he sent his only Son, give you the grace of fullness of life. Amen.

May God the Son, who comes to us as the Prince of Peace, reveal to you the path from brokenness to wholeness, from darkness to light. Amen.

May God the Holy Spirit, by whose working the Virgin Mary conceived Christ, cover you with the mantle of Christ’s peace. Amen.

And may almighty God bless you...



Fourth Sunday of Advent

Opening procession

The box of LOVE can be included in the opening procession as last week.

Introduction to lighting of wreath and placing of box of LOVE: (Sample text)

Reader: 'Maranatha - Come, Lord Jesus'. As we draw closer to Christmas we hear this prayer once more and are invited to make it our own. We cry out to Jesus to come into our lives and into our hearts.

'Come, Lord Jesus' - the One who is our hope, our peace, our joy and our love – come and be born in our hearts anew just as you were born in Bethlehem.

On this Advent Sunday, we light the fourth candle of our Advent wreath – the growing light dispels the darkness of the world as we approach the shortest day of the year. As we light this candle we will also bring forward a gift box of love. This Advent we open up our hearts to Jesus and make room for His love to enfold our lives. When Love comes down may we be ready to welcome Him into every corner of our being.

[Candle is lit first; then the box of LOVE is placed]

As the box of LOVE is placed, any of the following might be used at this point

- Come Lord Jesus Sung <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HzEHROG4iLk> (see link for this simple refrain that could be sung accapella) or
- O Come, O Come Emmanuel instrumental / refrain
- An alternative music suggestion might be music and the refrain from 'My Soul in Stillness Waits' - in the Gather Hymnal (especially suitable for week 1 & 2).
- Spoken response: *Come, Lord Jesus! Lord of Love, Come and be born in our hearts.*

Penitential Act

Lord Jesus, you came to gather us into one. Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you come with love beyond all telling. Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you will come in glory with salvation for all people. Lord, have mercy.

Prayer of the Faithful

The following could be used for the invitation to pray and response for each intention:

'We pray to the Lord of Love' – Lord, hear our prayer.

Particular prayers for the poor, the homeless, the lonely, for the abandoned, those in loveless relationships, those who need the tender embrace of God's love in their lives could be included this week...

Communion Reflection

Reader:

Let's take a moment to hear these words on love from a newly wed.

I got married in August 2020. It was a challenging time with the restrictions. My fiancé was amazing, always keeping a positive outlook and focusing on what was really important about the day – marrying each other! We wanted to get married because first and foremost, we were in love. Focusing on that helped us to deal with the disappointments and hazards that we came across on our journey towards marriage.

The best definition of love I have heard is "wanting good for someone, and not expecting anything in return." Romantic love is just one part of what is love. The past 20 months have been very difficult ones with the pandemic. I have a choice in my outlook on living today. If I choose to wear a face mask, clean my hands, queue patiently, smile (with my eyes if necessary!) and be kind to those I meet - out of love – I have a better time dealing with life right now. I find it makes me feel good when I do whatever is in my power to help others feel that little bit safer or happier.

Of course, I am human and full of flaws. So, I need some help with being a loving person - both romantically and socially. I get that help from God. Scripture tells us that God is love. God helps me find his love within me and share it with the world. Living my Christian vocation that simply has helped me through life so far. I think it is always a good question to ask myself – where do I find the ability to love others? And my answer - from the love God shares with me. *(Philip Lawlor, Pastoral Worker, Cathedral Parish)*

Announcements – use as locally relevant

- In the coming week you are invited to place your petitions in our box of LOVE– what might the love of God look like in your life? Who do you pray for in need of God's love in their lives at this time? This box will be placed in our crib scene on Christmas eve when we will pray for all your intentions.
- There are plenty of resources to support you on your Advent journey on our parish website and on the diocesan website, Kandle.ie – you might take a moment to look at them and use them during the week.
- The final of our popular Advent Scripture Sharing resources is available on the diocesan website [and continues in person/on zoom here in the parish on (.....) and you are very welcome to join us.].

Solemn Blessing

May God who came into our world as one of us, fill you hearts with every grace and blessing. **Amen.**

May you know the gentle embrace of God's love. **Amen.**

May these final days of Advent draw you closer to God who is with us always. **Amen.**

And may almighty God bless you...