

Waiting in Hope Longing for Peace

An Advent bulletin for home and parish
Week One 2023

The Prayer of Advent: Come, Lord Jesus

'Come, Lord Jesus' is the prayer and the cry of God's people in Advent. If we pause and look around our world, we know that this is a prayer that needs to be prayed. In this year we are praying especially across the diocese that the peace and light of the Lord Jesus, the Prince of Peace, will overcome the darkest depths of conflict in our world and that all people will come to know and live in peace, as is the will of God.

Bishop Denis and the Diocesan Commission for Liturgical Formation invite people across the diocese to pray the Advent Household Prayer throughout Advent.

As we undertake our Advent waiting, we do so in hope, for we know that Jesus is our peace, our salvation, the One for whom we long and the One who is already with us. In a world of conflict and division, how will you let the Prince of Peace into those corners of your life where he is most needed? As a new Church year begins, we pray, 'Come, Lord Jesus' - the One who was, who is and who is to come. For through Him *hope* overcomes despair, *peace* overcomes division, *joy* overcomes desolation, *love* overcomes hatred. **Maranatha! Come, Lord Jesus!**

Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

On Friday, December 8, we celebrate this feast day of Mary, remembering that from the first moment of her existence in the womb of her mother Anne, Mary was preserved free from Original Sin, she was full of grace. See

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bqeUpvMXLk8&feature=emb_logo for a short video on the meaning of this feast.

Advent Scripture Study Video Series

Parishioners across the diocese are invited to access these short weekly videos during Advent, from Fr Seán Maher, P.P. Balyna parish, on the Balyna Parish Youtube channel via Balynaparish.ie.

Fr Seán is a scripture scholar, and we are delighted that he is making these study videos available to a wide audience. Why not treat yourself to some time out to go deeper into the scriptures this Advent!

An Advent Tradition for Church and Home:



THE ADVENT WREATH

We invite you to continue or start the tradition of having an Advent wreath in the home. The advent wreath has a rich meaning. The **circle** of the wreath, with no beginning or end, symbolises the eternity of God. The **evergreen** reminds us of the everlasting life we have in Christ while any pine cones or pods in the wreath represent new life and resurrection. The **four candles** represent the four Sundays of Advent. **Purple** is traditionally a colour of penance and prayer while the **rose** pink candle that is lit on the Third Sunday (Gaudete/Rejoice Sunday) marks our joy as we move ever closer to Christmas.

As you light a candle on your Advent wreath for the first time, pray this prayer of blessing and take a moment talk to God about how you will journey through Advent this year alone or as a household. Finish your time of prayer, again, with the Advent prayer: Come, Lord Jesus!

A Blessing Prayer

Loving God,
let your blessing come upon us
as we light this wreath.
May it be a sign of hope for us
as we prepare for your coming
& may it turn our hearts to you
in the days ahead.
Give us & the world your peace and love
as we wait in joyful hope.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

Weekly Advent Gospel Link

The First Sunday of Advent marks the start of Year B in the three-year cycle of Sunday readings in the Church. For the next year, on a Sunday we will hear mainly from the Gospel of Mark.

Today, as we step into the season of Advent, Mark's gospel urges us to 'Be on your guard, stay awake'. (Chapter 13, Verse 33)

This passage is a strong reminder to us to ready ourselves for the coming of the Lord, to be attentive for God at work in our world and in our lives, to take time to pray to God who in love will give us the strength to face our lives in confidence. With hope in the Lord, we believe that Jesus is coming to us all the time. While in our Mass we pray, 'we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ' we must be ready and prepared to welcome Him into our lives today. *Are we ready to do this? Are we prepared to let Jesus into the 'stuff' of our lives, into all those corners where he can bring us the hope that comes from Him alone? What would that mean? What might that look like?*

Why not spend time reflecting on the Sunday Scriptures this Advent.

See kandle.ie for our weekly Scripture Sharing Reflections on the Advent Sunday readings and look out for a local scripture sharing group. If there isn't one, why not create one yourself and invite others to it. This year, the reflections are taken from homilies preached by the late Fr John Cummins and found in the recently published book, 'My Life In Your Hands, Year B & Year C'



Society of St. Vincent de Paul

Please remember and support the work of the Society of St Vincent de Paul this Advent



An Advent hymn to think about...

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

In many parishes the first sound of Advent is the singing of this traditional hymn. The text for the verses comes from what are known as the 'O antiphons' that are sung at Evening Prayer on the last days of Advent.

Sometime around the year 1100 an unknown author took these antiphons and turned them into a metrical Latin poem. Eventually, an Anglican priest named John Mason Neale translated the Latin text into English. It was published in an 1853 hymnal by Thomas Helmore, using a 15th century French melody. From these origins we now have one of the most popular and well known Advent hymns.

The verses convey a plaintive mood of longing and yearning for God with each verse giving a name for Jesus that is full of hope. Notice how the petition of the verse is met by the joyful promise of the refrain – 'O Come, O come, Emmanuel...Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel'. In this Advent season we can call on God to come to us, knowing in faith, hope and joy that God answers us.

An Advent Household Prayer

We invite you take a moment each day in Advent to light your Advent wreath/ candle, to thank God for your Advent Day and to pray this prayer in union with the rest of our diocesan family, praying for peace in our world and in our lives.

Loving God,
as your light grows in the dark of winter,
bring its strength and its hope
to the people of the Holy Land and to all people
who suffer through war and conflict.
Just as you sent the star of Bethlehem
to lead the way to your Son,
guide all people - leaders and citizens –
to follow your ways of peace and justice.
As we remember the difficult journey of Mary and Joseph,
may the Holy Family be a source of courage for each of us,
helping us to reach out in friendship
to the oppressed and displaced of this world.
Help us to see in the Christ-child we welcome this Christmas,
the one who came to bring an end to all divisions.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

And may the Lord bless us and keep us safe
this Advent day and always.

Amen.

Come, Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace.

