

# First Sunday of Advent (Year A)

## Sunday, November 27, 2022

**First Reading:** Isaiah 2:1-5

**Psalms #122 R:** Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord

**Second Reading:** Romans 13:11-14

**Gospel Acclamation Verse:** Show us your steadfast love, O Lord, and grant us your salvation.

**Gospel:** Matthew 24:37-44

**Theme:** Be prepared and have hope

### Commentary:

Do you know someone who is going to have a baby soon? They have a general idea of when the baby is expected to be born, but no one can say the exact day or hour. Do you see that mother living life as usual or is she getting ready for that baby? Maybe she is preparing a room, clothes, crib, car seat and such for when her baby is born. She has many dreams for that little one and great hope for a good future. She can choose not to prepare, yet her preparations will make all the difference once her little one is born.

All three of today's readings remind us that we need to be prepared too. Isaiah was preparing and hoping for the birth of the child Jesus, a saviour. Both Paul and Matthew, remind us that Jesus will return for us and we need to be ready because we do not know when that will be. We have a choice to not get caught off guard, like the three examples Jesus gives in Matthew's gospel. Jesus wants us to wake up and not go through our life unprepared for his return. He invites us to wake up to all the moments in our day when God is with us, protecting and loving us. He invites us to be grateful and to show that gratitude by paying attention to our loved ones and those in need around us.

As we begin a new liturgical year and the first week of Advent we can choose to get prepared. The word Advent is from the Latin word "adventus" which means "coming" or "arriving". It is a time to prepare for celebrating Jesus' birthday at Christmas, to prepare our hearts for noticing all the times during the day when God is with us, and a time to reflect on what we need to do to be ready for the Second Coming of Christ. It is a time of preparation and of hope. It is a good time to change our daily routine just a little so we spend a bit more time in prayer, in listening to Jesus, and in being of help to others who might be in need around us.

On the following page are a few different family activities to help you prepare. There are so many more online as well. You are invited to choose how you and your family will become prepared this Advent to make this the best Christmas ever.

**Prayer for Families:** Heavenly Father, we love this season of the year. We love the preparation for the celebration of the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Help us also remember that he is coming again and that you have told us to be prepared. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

### Discussion starter: (Choose one or more of these after reading today's scripture readings)

1. Decide as a family how you will help each other to prepare for not only this Christmas but also for when Jesus returns again.
2. What do the five candles on the Advent wreath represent? What are the weekly themes?  
(Hint: check out the family activity page below)

**Family Activity Page, Colouring Page, Cross Word Puzzle and Word Search: Pages 2-5**

Resources used for inspiration in this post: Holy Heroes, Living With Christ, Word On Fire, Dynamic Catholic, Sermons4Kids, google

## Family Activities - First Sunday of Advent

**ADVENT WREATH:** Make an Advent wreath (see colouring page) with the family, you will need:

- evergreen boughs or holly and ivy boughs, formed into a circle. (can be artificial)
- 3 purple and 1 pink candle with an optional white candle.
- 1 white candle in the centre is optional

Some like to add purple or red ribbon for decoration. On the 1st Sunday and throughout that week, light the first purple candle. On the 2nd Sunday, light the 1st and 2nd purple. The 3rd Sunday, known as Gaudium (Joy) Sunday the pink candle is lit with the other two. The fourth (purple) is lit on the 4th Sunday. The fifth, white candle is lit on it's own, Christmas Day. Some families use the wreath all week long, others just on Sunday. You can find daily scripture readings online to read and discuss together. When lighting the candles a prayer or song about waiting and being prepared is recommended.

**EXPLANATION OF THE WREATH:** As you put the wreath together talk about what each part represents: Evergreen boughs in a circle are both symbols of eternal life, and God's unending faithfulness to us.

4 candles represent the weeks of Advent. Purple is for time for prayer, penance, or sacrifice. Pink is for joy.

Week 1 (purple) = hope or the prophet's candle    Week 2 (purple) = peace or the angel's candle

Week 3 (pink) = Joy or the shepherd's candle    Week 4 (purple) = love or the Bethlehem candle

The white candle in the centre represents Christ, the light of the world and is lit Christmas Day.

If you choose ribbon: purple represents prayer, penance, or sacrifice. Red represents Jesus dying to save our souls and giving us back a friendship with God if we choose to; he is the way to the Father.

**BLESSING OF THE ADVENT WREATH:** Lord God, let your blessing come upon us as we light the candles of this wreath. May the wreath and its light be a sign of Christ's promise to bring us salvation. May he come quickly and not delay. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**ADVENT CALENDAR:** Another way to mark down the time to Christmas is to make or purchase an advent calendar. It contains 24 windows, with one window to open each day in the run-up to Christmas. There are several online resources for how to make this. Fun facts about the Advent: Advent was first celebrated over 250 years ago. The first advent calendar was made in Germany in 1851 (over 170 years ago) and was completely handmade.

**CHRISTINGLE:** Christingle's are symbolic decorations that are often made during Advent. Christingle means 'Christ's light' and once assembled, Christingles are often used during Advent in special services. The candles on the Christingles are lit and the congregation are encouraged to think about the light and hope that can be found through Jesus. consider making one for each family member.

**The different parts of a Christingle represent different things:**

- The orange fruit represents the world
- The red ribbon is a reminder that Jesus died
- The candle represents Jesus, the light of the world
- The sweets or dried fruit represent all of God's creations
- The cocktail sticks represent the four seasons



Try making your own Christingles with this fun craft activity to celebrate Advent for children at home.

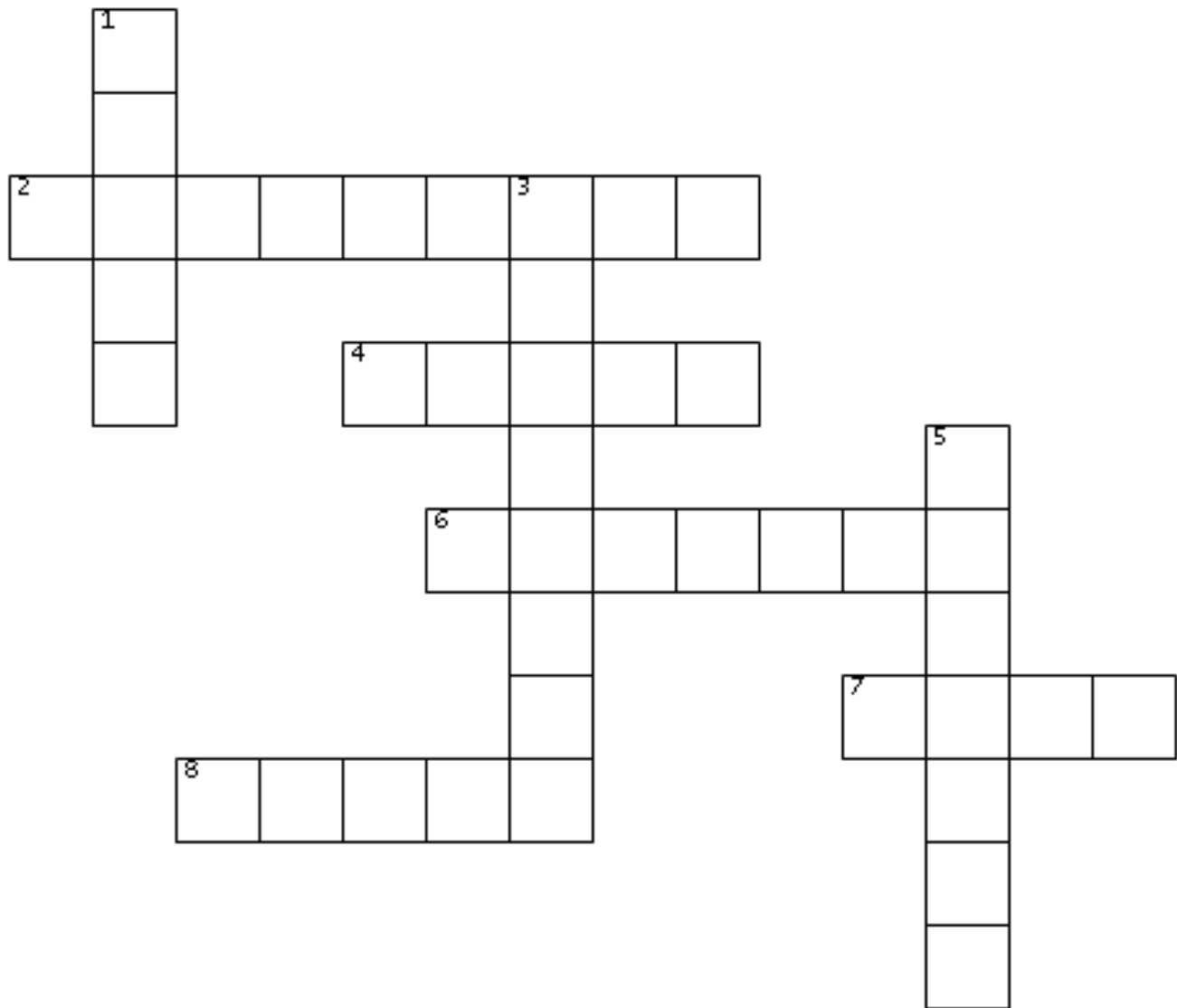
**CHRISTMAS CHAIN:** Make a looped Christmas chain for a house decoration. Each family member can write different ways to be prepared on each loop. Add more loops as required. Ideas for Being Prepared: praying, listening to God, obeying God, obeying parents, reading Bible, telling others, memorizing Bible verses, no swearing, no lying, visiting older people, Christmas music....

**HIDE AND SEEK:** Divide into 2 teams. Number each person in the teams. When the game begins, child #1 on team #1 will look for child #1 on team #2 and so on. All the children on one team will hide. The other team will shout....READY OR NOT...HERE I COME (after counting to 50 or 100). When each child has found his mate on the opposite team (#1 finds #1, #2 finds #2 etc.) then the teams will reverse and the other team will HIDE. Talk about Jesus wanting us to be READY for his coming.

COLOURING PAGE  
First Sunday of Advent Matthew 24:37-44



**CROSSWORD**  
Based on First Sunday of Advent Matthew 24:37-44



**Use the clues** to fill in the words above.  
Words can go across or down.  
Letters are shared when the words intersect.

**ACROSS**

- 2. The process of being saved
- 4. The name of the Son of God
- 6. To make ready
- 7. To have a desire with expectation
- 8. To ignite with friction to see in the dark

**DOWN**

- 1. To stop from sleeping
- 3. To educate knowledge to another
- 5. To feel joyful; to be glad

ANSWERS: AWAKE HOPE INSTRUCT JESUS LIGHT PREPARE REJOICE SALVATION

**WORD SEARCH**  
Based on First Sunday of Advent Matthew 24:37-44

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

Awake	Christ	Coming	Hope	Hour	Instructions
Joy	Light	Lord	Love	Peace	Prepare
Rejoice	Salvation	Unexpected	Unknown	Way	Zion