

Blessing the Christmas Tree: Welcoming Christ, Our Light

As we draw near to Christmas, one of the most loved traditions in our homes is decorating the Christmas tree. Its lights, ornaments, and evergreen branches speak to something deep within us: the hope, joy, and enduring life that Christ brings into the world.

Though many assume it is an ancient custom, the Christmas tree is actually a relatively modern tradition. Its earliest roots trace back to the medieval Christian mystery plays, where a single “tree of paradise” symbolized creation and redemption—often adorned with fruit and illuminated by a candle representing Christ, the Light of the World.

Over the centuries, this tree of paradise gradually became the Christmas tree we know today. Its evergreen branches remind us that God’s love does not fade. Its lights point us to Jesus, who shines in every darkness.

The Church invites families to honor this symbol with a simple and beautiful Blessing of the Christmas Tree—a way to welcome the light of Christ into our homes.

When to Bless the Tree

Traditionally, the tree is put up shortly before Christmas and may remain until the Solemnity of the Epiphany. Families may offer the blessing:

- On Christmas Eve, before the evening meal
- On Christmas Day, at a suitable time
- When the tree is decorated and ready to be lit

The blessing may be led by a parent or any family member. The tree’s lights are turned on after the prayer.

The Blessing of the Christmas Tree

A suitable song may be sung as all gather.

The leader makes the sign of the cross, saying:

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Leader:

Let us glorify Christ our Light, who brings salvation and peace into our midst, now and forever.

All: Amen.

Leader:

My brothers and sisters, amidst signs and wonders Christ Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea; his birth brings joy to our hearts and enlightenment to our minds. With this tree, decorated and adorned, may we welcome Christ among us; may its lights guide us to the perfect Light.

Liturgy of the Word

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel

Thus says the Lord GOD:

I too will take from the crest of the cedar,
from its topmost branches tear off a tender shoot,
and plant it on a high and lofty mountain;
on the mountain height of Israel
I will plant it.

It shall put forth branches and bear fruit,
and become a majestic cedar.

Birds of every kind shall dwell beneath it,
every winged thing in the shade of its boughs.

And all the trees of the field shall know
that I, the LORD,
bring low the high tree,
lift high the lowly tree,
wither up the green tree,
and make the withered tree bloom.
As I, the LORD, have spoken, so will I do.

The Word of the Lord.

R/. Thanks be to God.

Intercessions

Leader:

Let us ask God to send his blessing upon us and upon this sign of our faith in the Lord.

All: *Lord, give light to our hearts.*

1. That this tree of lights may remind us of the tree of glory on which Christ accomplished our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.
R/. Lord, give light to our hearts.
2. That the joy of Christmas may always be in our homes, let us pray to the Lord.
R/. Lord, give light to our hearts.
3. That the peace of Christ may dwell in our hearts and in the world, let us pray to the Lord.
R/. Lord, give light to our hearts.

All pray the **Lord's Prayer** together.

Prayer of Blessing

Leader (with hands joined):

Lord our God,
we praise you for the light of creation:
the sun, the moon, and the stars of the night.

We praise you for the light of Israel:
the Law, the prophets, and the wisdom of the Scriptures.

We praise you for Jesus Christ, your Son:
he is Emmanuel, God-with-us,
the Prince of Peace,
who fills us with the wonder of your love.

Lord God,
let your blessing come upon us
as we illumine this tree.
May the light and cheer it gives
be a sign of the joy that fills our hearts.

May all who delight in this tree
come to the knowledge and joy of salvation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
All: Amen.

The **lights of the tree are then illuminated.**

Conclusion

The leader signs themselves, saying:

Leader:

May the God of glory fill our hearts with peace and joy, now and forever.
All: Amen.

A verse of *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* may be sung:

O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by thine advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night
and death's dark shadow put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.