



Advent Wreath Lighting

Dear Missionary Children and Families,

Pope Francis has entrusted the Missionary Childhood Association with the responsibility of helping you form children as missionary disciples. Through membership in this Pontifical Mission Society, children learn about the lives of their peers around the world and join in prayer and sacrifice for children in the missions. In this way, children respond to the Holy Father's call to reach out to those in need on the margins of society with the Good News of Jesus. We hope that these resources will enrich your family's observance of the Advent and Christmas seasons.

First Week of Advent: Hope

Leader: The light of Jesus is hope, faith, joy and peace. As we gather around this Advent wreath each week and prepare for the birth of our Savior, we acknowledge His light through Scripture, prayer, and these candles. May we carry that light everywhere we go as His missionaries. The first candle, or Prophet's candle, symbolizes the light of Christ's hope for the world. It was announced by John the Baptist. *(Light one purple candle)*

All: Let our hearts shine with Christ's hope for all the world.

Reader 1: John 1: 6-9

All: Thanks Be to God.

Pause for silent reflection

Leader: Good and gracious God, increase our strength and desire to do good. Help us to reach out to those in need and those who long for justice in our world. Give us a heart that is open to our baptismal call to serve all of Your people. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Second Week of Advent: Faith

Leader: The light of Jesus is hope, faith, joy and peace. As we gather around this Advent wreath each week and prepare for the birth of our Savior, we acknowledge His light through Scripture, prayer, and these candles. May we carry that light everywhere we go as His missionaries. The second candle, or the Bethlehem candle, symbolizes faith. Mary and Joseph showed great faith in God's will as they journeyed to Bethlehem. *(Light two purple candles)*

All: Let our hearts shine with faith in Jesus for all the world.

Reader 2: Luke 2:4-7

All: Thanks Be to God.

Pause for silent reflection

Leader: Good and gracious God, instruct us in your ways. Help us to walk in Your Light as we reach out to those in need. Help us to build a world where there is no cause for war again. Guide us Lord, as we walk in Your light. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Third Week of Advent: Joy

Leader: The light of Jesus is hope, faith, joy and peace. As we gather around this Advent wreath each week and prepare for the birth of our Savior, we acknowledge His light through Scripture, prayer, and these candles. May we carry that light everywhere we go as His missionaries. The third candle, or the Shepherd's Candle, stands for joy. It was with great joy that the shepherds made known the Good News of the birth of Jesus. *(Light two purple candles and one pink candle)*

All: Let our hearts shine with the joy of Jesus for all the world.

Reader 3: Luke 2:16-18

All: Thanks Be to God.

Pause for silent reflection

Leader: All-powerful God, we wait in anticipation of the arrival of Your greatest sign to us – Your Son. In Jesus, Your Word took flesh on earth. In these last days of Advent may our prayers glow with His light. Help us to radiate Your love to one another and to all those we meet. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Fourth Week of Advent: Peace

Leader: The light of Jesus is hope, faith, joy and peace. As we gather around this Advent wreath each week and prepare for the birth of our Savior, we acknowledge His light through Scripture, prayer, and these candles. May we carry that light everywhere we go as His missionaries. The fourth candle, or the Angel's Candle, stands for peace. The Angels' message brought "peace on earth" to all who received it. *(Light all four candles)*

Reader 4: Luke 2: 10-14

All: Thanks Be to God.

Pause for silent reflection

Leader: God of peace and justice, You faithfully lead Your people to new possibilities. Give us wisdom, understanding, knowledge, and strength to build a world where there is no harm or ruin, but only peace and love amongst all of Your creatures. Create in us hearts that strive for goodness. We ask this through Christ our Lord, **Amen.**