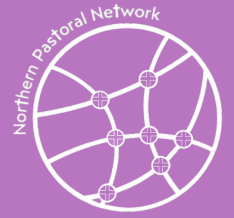


PRAYING AT HOME
ADVENT 2021
NORTHERN PASTORAL NETWORK



ADVENT

AT

HOME

WWW.NORTHERNPASTORAL.NETWORK

*"You have made us for yourself, O Lord,
and our hearts are restless until they rest in you."
St Augustine*

The Church has many seasons. Advent is a season of preparation for the great feast of Christmas. In the 4 weeks of Advent we have a time to prepare spiritually for Christmas marking the arrival of the Son of God to a stable in Bethlehem.

In the short days, dark nights and chill of winter, we reminisce of the brighter and warmer days that have passed and in hope, we long for their return. We are tired by the strain of this pandemic and the disruption that it has brought to our lives. We yearn for constancy, we seek out signs of hope, and we long for something to fill the void in our lives. Our constancy and our hope are found in God. God is with us.

As we set out on our journey towards Christmas, we may find ourselves connecting with the emotions of weariness, anxiety and fear felt by Mary and Joseph on the road to Bethlehem.



Unsure of what lay ahead Mary and Joseph embarked on a courageous journey fuelled by their trust in God and an expectant hope of better things to come. Let trust and hope be the hallmarks of our prayerful journey this Advent.

We invite you to use this resource through each of the four Sundays of Advent. Week by week, may the candles on our Advent wreaths dispel the darkness as we journey towards Christmas and the arrival of the Light of the World, Jesus Christ.



May Christ Emmanuel be with you in these weeks of waiting and anticipation and we pray that, as you journey through Advent, you will grow closer to Christ experiencing the hope, love, joy, and peace that a relationship with Jesus brings.

*Rejoice!! Rejoice!! Emmanuel.
Shall come to thee, O Israel.*

Tips for using this resource



Set aside time to pray

This is a time for you to connect with God, so find a time that will be free from interruptions or hurrying onto another task. Having a regular time to pray helps prayer to become part of our routine and strengthens us to love God, our neighbours and ourselves.

If you already have a time of prayer such as the Rosary you could combine this prayer with it.

Praying together as a family

Children love to be involved. Let them read, sing, share their thoughts and questions and at the end, they could blow out the candles to send their prayers to heaven. Families sometimes say it can be hard to make teenage children pray. Our advice is to invite them to be with you. The following words might help.

"Prayer is really important for me, it gives me strength, peace and a time to reflect. I pray for you every day and I'd really like us to pray together, having you with me would be a great gift."

Pope Francis encourages an alliance between young and older people through the sharing of memories, wisdom, and experience of older generations. Young people are hungry for guidance and support as they prepare for the future. Why not share this time of prayer with someone from a different generation and be richly blessed in the process.



Get creative

You might have favourite hymns or reflective music that you wish to use in your time of prayer. Bring your playlist or CD player to your time of prayer or if you can sing or play an instrument, you can give great glory to God using your talents.



Create a prayer space. You might prefer to read the scriptures from your own Bible, pray in front of the crib or bring a favourite image. Couples might wish to light the candles from their wedding day or parents of a new baby, their baptismal candle.

Make use of online connections



Over the last year and a half we have become skilled in connecting with people using our phones and devices. Setting aside a time where people can connect for prayer online might be an activity you consider with family or friends.

QR Codes

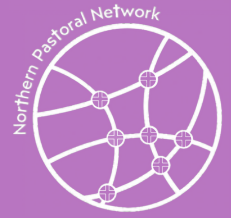
The QR Codes in this book will bring you to further resources on our website.

If using a printed copy, scan the QR Code using the camera on your smartphone.

If using a digital copy, click on the QR Code.



1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT 28TH NOVEMBER 2021 HOPE



Jesus in our midst - An activity for the home.

The Advent wreath is a Christian tradition symbolising the passage of the four weeks of Advent. It is a circle of evergreen foliage that holds five candles. The circle represents God's infinite love and mercy and the evergreens the hope of eternal life. During the season of Advent one candle on the wreath is lit each Sunday, until all candles are lit. The candles represent hope, love, joy and peace. Traditionally we use three purple candles, one pink candle and a white candle which we light on Christmas Day. Make an advent wreath and place it in a place where you can gather to pray.



Scan or Click on QR Code
for Colouring in Sheet



You can also colour in a paper wreath - follow the QR code for a colouring in sheet.

Share a picture of your wreath with family and let them know that you are praying for them.

Prayer time at home

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, **Amen.**

A reading from the Gospel according to Luke.

(Luke 21:25-28,34-36)

Jesus said to his disciples: 'There will be signs in the sun and moon and stars; on earth nations in agony, bewildered by the clamour of the ocean and its waves; men dying of fear as they await what menaces the world, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand erect, hold your heads high, because your liberation is near at hand.

'Watch yourselves, or your hearts will be coarsened with debauchery and drunkenness and the cares of life, and that day will be sprung on you suddenly, like a trap. For it will come down on every living man on the face of the earth. Stay awake, praying at all times for the strength to survive all that is going to happen, and to stand with confidence before the Son of Man.'

From The Jerusalem Bible © 1966 by Darton Longman & Todd Ltd and Doubleday and Company Ltd.

Pause for thought

As we light our first candle on the wreath, we begin our time of waiting, waiting in hope for the coming of Christ on Christmas Day.

In the Gospel Jesus calls us to, "Stay awake, praying at all times," He's inviting us to be vigilant. This isn't a time to be waiting in boredom, as we so often do when shopping, looking for the quickest way through the queue, distracting ourselves with our phones and getting out as soon as we can?

This is a time to wait in anticipation and hope. What signs of hope have you noticed for which you want to give thanks?

What strength or grace do you need to ask God for as you prepare for Christmas?



*Music Suggestion for the
'Pause for Thoughts'
Hope for Everyone
by Matt Maher*

A family member lights the first purple candle – the candle of hope.

Hope is like a light shining in a dark place. As we look at the light of this candle, we celebrate the hope we have in Jesus Christ. Hope, because God is faithful and will keep the promises made to us. God sent us the Messiah, the Son of God, as he promised. As we look upon this first candle, we ask God to fill our hearts and minds with hope.

God of Hope,
we enter your holy season of Advent giving thanks to you for the love you have for all of us.
We begin to prepare for the celebration of the birth of our Lord and Saviour, your Son, Jesus.
With the promise of your Son, we live with great hope and anticipation.
Hope in the knowledge of the love you continue to give us.
Hope in the knowledge that Jesus is coming into our lives and hearts to heal us and love us.
We are a people of hope, and no matter how difficult times sometimes are, we know that your Son is coming and that you continue to shower us with your love.
Amen.



Prayer for a light in the darkness

(adapted from the Christopher Prayer Book)

Father, grant that I may be a bearer of Christ Jesus, your Son. Allow me to warm the often cold, impersonal scene of modern life with your burning love. Strengthen me, by your Holy Spirit to carry out your mission of changing the world or some definite part of it, for the better. Despite my failures, bring home to me that my advantages are your blessings to be shared with others. Nourish in me a desire to build up rather than tear down. Never let me forget that it is far better to light one candle than to curse the darkness. And to join my light, one day, with yours.

Amen.

Advent Litany

Lord Jesus, you are the light of the world.
You are light in our darkness.
Son of God, save us from our sins.
Son of Mary, deepen our love.
Bring hope into the lives of all people.
Give your peace to all nations.
Be the joy of all who love you.
Bring unity among all who believe in you.
Bless us as we gather here in your name.
Lord Jesus, stay with us always.

Come, Lord Jesus.
Come, Lord Jesus.
Come, Lord Jesus.
Come, Lord Jesus.
Come, Lord Jesus.
Come, Lord Jesus.
Come, Lord Jesus.
Come, Lord Jesus.
Come, Lord Jesus.
Come, Lord Jesus.



Let us pray. May Christ give us his peace and joy and let us share them with others.
All peace and glory are his for ever. Amen.
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

5TH DECEMBER 2021

LOVE



Jesus in our midst - An activity for the home.

Christmas decorations bring great cheer to the family home, especially the Christmas tree. The tree reminds us of all that is beautiful, all that is filled with the gentleness and the promise of God. It stands in our midst as a tree of light, that we might promise the light of Christ to one another and to our world. Gather together around the Christmas tree with the lights off. Bless the star or angel from the top of the tree with Holy Water, pray together and when you say Amen, turn the lights on.

God of all creation, we praise you for this tree which brings beauty, memories and the promise of life to our home. May your blessing be upon all who gather around this tree. Just as the Wise Men were guided by a star may be guided to Christ this Christmas. May we wait expectantly for the Herald of the Angels to proclaim the coming of the Christ, the Prince of Peace. You are our God, living and reigning, forever and ever. Amen.



Prayer Time at Home

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

A reading from the Gospel according to Luke.

(Luke 3:1-6)

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.

Every valley shall be filled,

and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
and the crooked shall be made straight,
and the rough ways made smooth;
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

Pause for Thought

When John the Baptist announces, "A baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins," he is publicly calling each of us to examine our lives, our hearts and our relationship with God. He wants us to be prepared for the coming of Jesus this Christmas, and through the gift of the Sacrament of Reconciliation we will be ready to welcome Jesus into our lives and homes. The sacrament is God's loving way of helping us to grow closer to him.

Take time to reflect on the changes you might need to make in your life. Perhaps sinful paths you need to avoid or habits that you need to overcome. How will you, "Prepare the way of the Lord," this advent? What paths, valleys and mountains do you need to fix to fully welcome Jesus.

Take time to consider God's loving invitation to be reconciled with Him. In the quiet of your own heart say an Act of Sorrow.



*Music Suggestion for the
'Pause for Thoughts'
O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
by Enya*

*A family member lights the second purple candle
– the candle of love.*

Today we light the second purple candle, representing love. We prepare for the celebration of the birth of our Lord and hold within our hearts the abundance of love that our God brings to this world.

God of love,
during the Advent season, when life is busy and excitement is in the air, we take time to think about the gift of the birth of Jesus.
We reflect on the great love you have for us that will be shown through your Son, Jesus.
May the light of this candle reflect the light that resides within each of us, the love that we can bring to this world, and the healing we can offer those who are suffering.
Amen.



A Prayer for Love and Service

Lord, you created us for yourself and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Please show us how to love you with all our hearts and our neighbour as ourselves. Teach us to be practical about loving one another in you and for you and as you desire. Show us our immediate neighbour today; the need of others is your call to our attention.

Remind us that you count as done to you what we do for one another, and that our turning away from one another is really turning our backs on you. Make us know, love and serve you in this life and be happy for ever in the next in union with all our brothers and sisters. **Amen.**

Advent Litany

Lord Jesus, you are the light of the world.
You are light in our darkness.
Son of God, save us from our sins.
Son of Mary, deepen our love.
Bring hope into the lives of all people.
Give your peace to all nations.
Be the joy of all who love you.
Bring unity among all who believe in you.
Bless us as we gather here in your name.
Lord Jesus, stay with us always.

Come, Lord Jesus.
Come, Lord Jesus.
Come, Lord Jesus.
Come, Lord Jesus.
Come, Lord Jesus.
Come, Lord Jesus.
Come, Lord Jesus.
Come, Lord Jesus.
Come, Lord Jesus.
Come, Lord Jesus.



Let us pray. May Christ give us his peace and joy and let us share them with others.
All peace and glory are his for ever. **Amen.**
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, **Amen.**

3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

12TH DECEMBER 2021

JOY



Jesus in our midst - An activity for the home.

Gaudete Sunday has for many years been the day when the children of Rome bring the figurines of Baby Jesus from their cribs to St. Peter's Square to be blessed by the Pope during the Angelus. The day is affectionately known as "Bambinelli Sunday." Your baby Jesus may have been blessed at Mass. At home now, say this prayer together as the baby Jesus is cradled in someone's hands.

God our Father, you loved us so much 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, this image of Jesus might be a sign of your presence and love in our homes. Open our hearts, that we might receive Jesus in joy, do always what he asks of us, and see him in those who need our love. We ask this in the name of Jesus, your beloved Son, who came to give peace to the world. You, who live and reign forever and ever. Amen.

Child Jesus



Now you are invited to wrap the baby Jesus figurine in Christmas wrapping and to place him under the tree, to be opened as the first gift of Christmas.

Prayer Time at Home

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

A reading from the Gospel according to Luke.

(Luke 3:10-18)

When all the people asked John, 'What must we do?' he answered, 'If anyone has two tunics he must share with the man who has none, and the one with something to eat must do the same.' There were tax collectors too who came for baptism, and these said to him, 'Master, what must we do?' He said to them, 'Exact no more than your rate.' Some soldiers asked him in their turn, 'What about us? What must we do?' He said to them, 'No intimidation! No extortion! Be content with your pay!'

A feeling of expectancy had grown among the people, who were beginning to think that John might be the Christ, so John declared before them all, 'I baptise you with water, but someone is coming, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fan is in his hand to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his barn; but the chaff he will burn in a fire that will never go out.' As well as this, there were many other things he said to exhort the people and to announce the Good News to them.

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*Music Suggestion for the
'Pause for Thoughts'
Come To Us
by Greg Watson*

Pause for Thought

John the Baptist knew that his role was to bring people to Christ. This is our role too. We try to live our lives with honesty, compassion, and generosity so that people will be able to know that our faith in Jesus makes a difference in our everyday lives.

What actions of ours point the way to Jesus?
What ways do you share your tunic or food with others, and how are we content with what God has given to us?
How might we joyfully give this Advent and Christmas?



A family member lights the third pink candle – the candle of joy.

Today we light the third candle on our Advent wreath, the pink candle. The theme this week is joy. We are getting closer to celebrating the birth of our Lord and Saviour and the great joy he brings to our lives.

God of joy, as we get closer to the celebration of the birth of your Son, we remain filled with joy. We know that life often presents us with challenges and that it is difficult to always be optimistic and cheerful. However, we know that you wish us to be a joy-filled people. Help us to focus on our blessings, to be appreciative of the many people who support us, and to be ever mindful of your constant presence. As we approach the celebration of Jesus' birth, may the peace and joy of the season fill our hearts.

Amen.

Praises of God - St Francis of Assisi

You are holy, Lord, the only God and your deeds are wonderful. You are strong. You are great. You are the Most High, You are almighty. You holy Father, are King of heaven and earth. You are Three and One, Lord God, all good. You are Good, all Good, supreme Good, Lord God, Living and true. You are love, You are wisdom. You are humility, You are endurance. You are rest, You are peace. You are joy and gladness. You are justice and moderation. You are all our riches, And you suffice for us. You are beauty. You are gentleness. You are our protector, You are our guardian and defender. You are courage. You are our haven and our hope. You are faith, Our great consolation. You are our eternal life, Great and wonderful Lord, God almighty, Merciful Saviour.

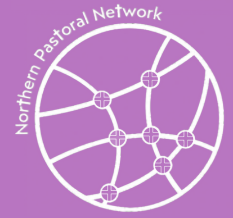
Advent Litany

Lord Jesus, you are the light of the world.	Come, Lord Jesus.
You are light in our darkness.	Come, Lord Jesus.
Son of God, save us from our sins.	Come, Lord Jesus.
Son of Mary, deepen our love.	Come, Lord Jesus.
Bring hope into the lives of all people.	Come, Lord Jesus.
Give your peace to all nations.	Come, Lord Jesus.
Be the joy of all who love you.	Come, Lord Jesus.
Bring unity among all who believe in you.	Come, Lord Jesus.
Bless us as we gather here in your name.	Come, Lord Jesus.
Lord Jesus, stay with us always.	Come, Lord Jesus.



Let us pray. May Christ give us his peace and joy and let us share them with others.
All peace and glory are his for ever. **Amen.**
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, **Amen.**

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT 19TH DECEMBER 2021 PEACE



Jesus in our midst - An activity for the home.

By the fourth Sunday of Advent the preparations for Christmas are well underway. We encourage you to wrap up warmly and take a drive or a walk to take in the beauty of the Christmas lights as you make your way to a local Church.

At the Church we invite you to take time to place your intentions before God and to ask for blessing on the close of this Advent season.



Prayer Time at Home

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

A reading from the Gospel according to Luke.

(Luke 1:39-45)

Mary set out and went as quickly as she could to a town in the hill country of Judah. She went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. Now as soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. She gave a loud cry and said, 'Of all women you are the most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord? For the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leapt for joy. Yes, blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled.'

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Pause for Thought

"Mary set out and went as quickly as she could," to meet her cousin Elizabeth. We hear of Mary going out of her way and how she is driven by desire to meet Elizabeth. Mary wants to share her joy with Elizabeth. Mary also wants to see with her own eyes the blessings that God has shared with her cousin.

This advent Gospel is perhaps the most beautiful reflection of two cousins catching up with one another. We have all missed the catching up with our extended family during this Pandemic.

Think of the family members that you have missed being with. Think of the homes that you haven't been able to visit. This year, like Mary, we might find ourselves going into the homes of our relatives and greeting them.

Mary carried in her womb, Jesus Christ, the Word made Flesh. May we carry with us the Joy of Jesus, the Word made flesh in our hearts as we visit our family and friends this Christmas.

Take time to reflect on the messages of hope, love, joy and peace that you want to bring with you.



*Music Suggestion for the
'Pause for Thoughts'
God With Us
by All Sons & Daughters*

A family member lights the last purple candle – the candle of peace.

Today we light the fourth candle on our Advent wreath. The theme this week is peace. Jesus, Prince of Peace brings healing to a broken world.

God of Peace,
in a troubled world where there is suffering and strife, conflict and war, we pray for peace. We also pray for inner peace, that our minds and bodies will be calm and at peace in the knowledge that You are about to come to us. Without inner peace, we know there can be no global peace, so we look to you, Lord, for your love and direction to calm ourselves and be instruments of peace in the world.
Amen.

"I Have Come to Bring You Peace"

I have come to bring you peace.
Not the peace of the season, for it is too fleeting,
Not the peace of the carol, for it is too nostalgic,
Not the peace of the greeting card, for it is too slick,
Not the peace of the crib, for it is too wistful.

Rather, I have come to bring you peace,
Peace of the ordinary, the daily, the homely,
Peace for the worker, the driver, the student,
Peace in the office, the kitchen, the farm.

I have come to bring you peace,
The peace of accepting yourself as I fashioned you,
The peace of knowing yourself as I know you,
The peace of loving yourself as I love you,
The peace of being yourself as I am who I am.

I have come to bring you peace,
The peace that warms you at the completion of a task,
The peace that invades you at the close of the day,
The peace that sustains you at the beginning of the day,
The peace that reinforces you when you are reconciled with one another,
The peace that touches you when your family is in order.

Without peace, my coming is unfulfilled.
Without peace, my birth is forgettable.
Without peace, Christmas is a contradiction.
I have come to bring you peace.

Advent Litany

Lord Jesus, you are the light of the world.
You are light in our darkness.
Son of God, save us from our sins.
Son of Mary, deepen our love.
Bring hope into the lives of all people.
Give your peace to all nations.
Be the joy of all who love you.
Bring unity among all who believe in you.
Bless us as we gather here in your name.
Lord Jesus, stay with us always.

**Come, Lord Jesus.
Come, Lord Jesus.
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Come, Lord Jesus.
Come, Lord Jesus.
Come, Lord Jesus.
Come, Lord Jesus.**



Let us pray. May Christ give us his peace and joy and let us share them with others.
All peace and glory are his for ever. Amen.
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Advent in Your Local Parish



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Produced by The Northern Pastoral Network: a group of laity, clergy and religious.

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