

The Advent Wreath helps us as we get ready to welcome Jesus at Christmas (2023)



Light has always been a symbol of hope in the darkness. Long, long before Jesus was born, we know that the people of Eastern Europe made wreaths of evergreen branches and added lighted candles as a sign of hope during the dark days of winter. This was a reminder to them that, after the darkest time of the year, Spring would soon be with them again. In the northern countries of Europe, lights were placed on wagon wheels and prayers were offered to the god of light (Apollo was the Roman god of the sun) to turn

the wheel of the earth back towards to the sun. By the 1500's Christians had adopted this tradition and were using an Advent Wreath as part of their preparations for Christmas. In the 17th century, the Advent Wreath was used throughout Germany to mark the time spent waiting for the birth of the Baby Jesus at Christmas. From Germany, this tradition spread to the rest of Europe and eventually all around the world.

What does the Advent Wreath mean?

- Usually, the Advent Wreath is made with 5 candles (3 purple, 1 pink and 1 white) with a circle of evergreen leaves wrapped around them. This circle reminds us that God's love for us has no beginning and no end.
- The candles remind us that Jesus is the light that has come into our world. (See John: 3:19).
- We use 3 purple candles and 1 pink candle to represent the four weeks of Advent, which begins this year on Sunday, December 3rd this year..
- The colour purple is used because, long ago, purple dye was expensive and was the colour worn by royalty. Advent is the season of the coming of our King. The priest wears purple vestments at Mass during Advent.



- The pink candle is lit on the third Sunday in Advent, which we call Joyful Sunday. It reminds us that we are now very close to Christmas. Long ago, Advent, like Lent, was a time of fasting. People were allowed to "break" their fast on Joyful Sunday, and the priest wore pink or rose-coloured vestments at Mass. This tradition soon became part of the Advent Wreath.

- As we light the candles each week, we are reminded of our journey towards Christmas, when we welcome the baby, Jesus. The people of the Old Testament waited a long, long time for this big event. They waited in JOYFUL HOPE for God to be

with them. They called him Emmanuel. We light the white candle on Christmas Day, because our waiting is over. God is with us! O Come, O Come, Emmanuel!

The Advent Wreath in the School or Classroom Sacred Space

Place the Advent Wreath in your classroom sacred Space. Light the candles during prayer time for the four weeks of Advent.

Week 1: Light One Purple Candle Week 2: Light Two Purple Candles

Week 3: Light Two purple and One Pink candle Week 4: Light all the candles.



The Jesse Tree



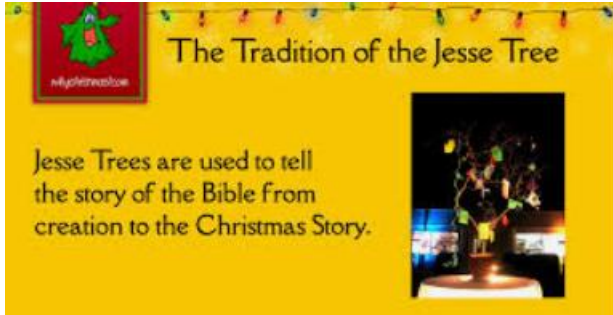
- The Jesse Tree is a very old Christmas tradition.
 - It tells the story of Jesus' family tree.
 - Jesse is the father of the great King David in the Old Testament.
 - The Jesse Tree shows us some of the important people in the Old Testament.
 - We hang ornaments on the Jesse tree, which tells the story from the Bible about God's people **before** Jesus was born.
- Each story shows God's plan to save us and to prepare us for the coming of his Son, the Messiah.

Figures and Symbols for your Jesse Tree: GIL 6th Class Manual pages 180/181

We usually hang Biblical symbols on the Jesse Tree. They represent figures and events from the Bible. You can find the instructions these symbols for the Jesse Tree in the **Grow In Love Teachers' Manual, 6th Class**, pages 180/181 and 197. Cut them out, colour them in and attach them with a coloured string or ribbon to hang them on the branches of your "tree".



Can you find Jesus' Ancestors in the Bible?



Look in your Bible to find the name of Jesus' family. Write each name in the space below and match them to the symbols from the list below.

Bible Reference	Name	Symbol
Genesis 2;7-9	_____	
Genesis 12: 1-7	_____	
Genesis 37: 23-28	_____	
Exodus 3: 1-10	_____	
Exodus 20: 1-7	_____	
1 Samuel 16:1-13	_____	
1 Samuel 17: 12-51	_____	
Luke 3: 2-29	_____	
Matthew 1: 18-24 (2 names)	_____	
Luke 2: 1-6	_____	



Baby Jesus, 10 Commandments, stars in the sky, apple, burning bush, shell and water, sheep and shepherd's crook, coloured coat, slingshot, tools and flowers (lilies).