



ORDER FOR THE BLESSING OF AN ADVENT WREATH

First Sunday of Advent

INTRODUCTION

The use of the Advent Wreath is a traditional practice which has found its place in the church as well as in the home. The blessing of an Advent Wreath takes place on the First Sunday of Advent or on the evening before the First Sunday of Advent. The blessing may be celebrated during Mass (see complete edition, nos. 1517-1520), a celebration of the word of God, or Evening Prayer.

Customarily the Advent Wreath is constructed of a circle of evergreen branches into which are inserted four candles. According to tradition, three of the candles are violet and the fourth is rose. However, four violet or white candles may also be used.

The candles represent the four weeks of Advent and the number of candles lighted each week corresponds to the number of the current week of Advent. The rose candle is lighted on the Third Sunday of Advent, also known as Gaudete Sunday.

When the blessing of the Advent Wreath is celebrated in the home, it is appropriate that it be blessed by a parent or another member of the family; the shorter rite may appropriately be used for this purpose.

When the Advent Wreath is used in the home, the opening prayer of the Sunday Mass is recited when the candles are lighted. The lighting of the candles may be preceded or followed by an Advent hymn and a Scripture reading. The lighting of the Advent Wreath may fittingly be included as a part of the evening meal.

The Advent Wreath may be blessed by a priest, deacon, or a lay minister.

ORDER OF BLESSING OF THE WREATH WITHIN MASS

After the Gospel reading, the celebrant in the Homily, based on the Sacred Text and pertinent to the particular place and the people involved, explains the meaning of the celebration.

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

The General Intercessions follow, either in the form usual at Mass or in the form provided here. The celebrant concludes the intercessions with the Prayer of Blessing. From the following intentions, those best for the occasion may be used or adapted, or other intentions that apply to particular circumstances may be composed.

Celebrant: Christ came to bring us salvation and has promised to come again. Let us pray that we may be always ready to welcome him.

All: **Come, Lord Jesus.**

Bidder: That the keeping of Advent may open our hearts to God's love, we pray to the Lord.

That the light of Christ may penetrate the darkness of sin, we pray to the Lord..

That this wreath may constantly remind us to prepare for the coming of Christ, we pray to the Lord.

That the Christmas season may fill us with peace and joy as we strive to follow the example of Jesus, we pray to the Lord.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

With outstretched hands, the celebrant says the prayer of blessing:

**Lord God,
your Church joyfully awaits
the coming of its Saviour,
who enlightens our hearts and dispels
the darkness of ignorance and sin.**

**Pour forth your blessings upon us
as we light the candles of this wreath;
may their light reflect the splendour of Christ,
who is Lord, for ever and ever.
Amen.**

Or:

**Lord our God,
we praise you for your Son, Jesus Christ:
he is Emmanuel, the hope of the peoples,
he is the wisdom that teaches and guides us,
he is the Saviour of every nation.**

**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.**

The first candle is lighted