

The Gospel at Home

This Week's Gospel: Luke 21:25-28, 34-36

The Advent Sundays pave the way for the celebration of Jesus' first coming at his birth in Bethlehem, his Second Coming at the end of times, and his continued coming to all who gather in his name. This Sunday's Gospel describes that Second Coming and the fulfillment of the human race at the end of time. This Sunday is also the beginning of the new Liturgical Year.

Exploring the Gospel Message

Seeds (Preschool): This week's lesson helps your young child recognize that the real meaning of Christmas is that Jesus, God's Son, has become one of us. Ask your child to share the stories, activities, and pictures from the lesson. Display the Advent Wreath, and use the simple one-sentence prayers each week before Christmas.

Promise (Grades K-1): This week your child learned that the season of Advent is a time to prepare for the celebration of Jesus' birthday. The class talked about the things that families do to get ready for Christmas. Post the Advent calendar your child brings home. Follow the daily suggestions. Also, use the Advent table prayer at all your family meals.

Good News (Grades 2-3): Your child learned that the Advent Wreath is a reminder that Jesus is coming. He or she also learned about God's faithfulness through the story of David. Ask your child to share, "David Sings about God's Promises," with the family. Post your child's Advent calendar, and follow the suggestions for week one.

Venture (Grades 4-6): This week your child made plans to spread Jesus' love during the season of Advent. Ask your child to share these plans. Then, as a family, decide on two or three things your family can do together to spread that love to the people in your lives. Talk about why the Advent season is a time of promise and a time of hope. Ask your child to share with the family what he or she learned about the Jewish feast of Hanukkah and Saint Nicholas.

Visions (Grades 7-8): In class this week, your teen learned that Advent offers a call to grow, to change, and to make a difference for others. He or she also explored what Jesus expects of us all upon his return. Talk as a family about why it is important to grow and change. Ask your teen about the graphic story titled, "Sorry Isn't Enough." Then make family plans about ways you can use the Advent season to make a difference at home, in school or work, and in the community.

Pray Together

Plan to have a family Advent Wreath. The wreath should have four candles—three purple and one pink are traditional, but all white candles will do. During the first week of Advent light one candle each evening. The second week light two, and the third week three. If you have colored candles, the third week is for the pink candle. Then for the last week you will have all four candles lit. Say a prayer together in your own words that shows you are anxious for the coming of Jesus. It can be as simple as "Come, Lord Jesus, come."