

TALKING ABOUT ADVENT >>>

Advent, the first four weeks of the Church year, is an opportunity to prayerfully prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus. During the season of Advent, the color purple reminds us of the call to change our hearts and repent. The Advent Wreath, Jesse Tree, and O Antiphons introduce a spirit of waiting, with joyful expectation.

Scripture



Read **1 Corinthians 1:4–9**. Paul is encouraging the Church community at Corinth to have hope and courage. In what areas of your life do you need God's strength?

HELPING YOUR CHILD UNDERSTAND >>>

Advent

- At this age, many children are beginning to develop an interest in history and historical persons. Encourage them to research some of the Old Testament people who waited for the Messiah (e.g., Daniel, Isaiah).
- It is common for children of this age to enjoy being a part of meaningful rituals. Provide opportunities for leading family prayer and participating in parish Advent rituals.



CATHOLIC FAMILY CUSTOMS >>>

Feast of Saint Barbara (December 4)

There is a custom observed in Saint Barbara's honor that ties into the meaning of the Advent season. A Barbara branch is the name given to a twig that is broken from a fruit tree (especially cherry), placed in a bowl of water, and kept in a warm, well-lit part of the house. Barbara branches call to mind the image of Christ as a flower from the root of Jesse (Isaiah 11:1). You might use a Christmas cactus or an amaryllis and adapt. The custom can help children grasp the meaning of Advent and Christmas. The branches can also be placed around the Nativity Scene when they have blossomed.

FAMILY PRAYER >>>



At a family meal on each of the four Sundays of Advent, light the appropriate number of candles on the Advent wreath or candelabra and pray this blessing:

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation: in this food and in our sharing. Blessed are you as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever.

Come, Lord Jesus! Come quickly! Amen.



For a multimedia glossary of Catholic Faith Words, Sunday readings, seasonal and Saint resources, and chapter activities go to aliveinchrist.osv.com.