

# Advent Lesson

## Lesson Preparation:

Watch the Catholic Brain video on Advent ahead of time. You will need to have a Bible on hand for this lesson. You will also need to print and make copies of the attached activity sheet.

## Opening Prayer:

Scripture: “But you, Bethlehem-Ephrathah too small to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel; whose origin is from of old, from ancient times.” Micah 5:1

Leader: Lord, our God, you have given us this season of Advent to prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus. As we go through all the preparations, that can make us so busy, help us to keep our minds and hearts focused on You, the greatest gift of the season. Amen.

Together: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created, and You shall renew the face of the earth. O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit, we may be truly wise and ever rejoice in His consolations, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Opening:

Let the students know that you will be exploring the liturgical season of Advent. Ask them, “What is Advent?” Let them respond and see what they already know. You may correct any errors, but don’t worry about getting into too much detail yet. The rest of the lesson will do that. You’re just assessing what they already know, and getting them thinking about the topic.

Next, ask them to share (or write down) some things their families do for Advent. Be sure that the discussion stays focused on what they do during Advent, not Christmas. Tell them that later in the lesson, we will be coming back to this question and if they get any ideas, they can write them down and share them with their families.

## Watch the Advent Video on Catholic Brain

**Comprehension Questions:** *Note: These questions are asked after the video, just to check student comprehension. They are not discussion questions, but be sure students understand the answers to these questions before moving on*

- 1) What is Advent? *Advent is the season before Christmas during which we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus. It is also the beginning of a new liturgical year.*
- 2) When does Advent begin? *It begins four Sundays before Christmas.*
- 3) What are the colors of the candles on the Advent wreath? *There are three purple candles, and one rose candle.*
- 4) Why is purple the liturgical color for the season of Advent? *It is a penitential season.*
- 5) What does the rose candle symbolize? *It is for Gaudete Sunday. Gaudete means "rejoice."*

**Discussion Questions:** *Note: These questions are for student discussion. The students should consider these questions and comment on them. There are some key points included in this lesson, after each question, that you can use to help guide their discussion toward truth. It's important that the students think about and discuss these things, but that they don't leave the discussion with false impressions about what is true.*

- 1) How does the Advent wreath help us pray during Advent? *The wreath reminds us of God's everlasting love, and as we light more candles, we prepare to celebrate Jesus, the Light, coming to the world. There are family prayers we can pray around the Advent wreath.*
- 2) What is the difference between Advent and the Christmas season? *Advent is a time of expectant waiting, and has a penitential character. It is important to celebrate each season in its own way. The Christmas season lasts until the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, not December 25 only.*
- 3) What are some things your family can do this Advent? *Answers may vary, but this is a time that students may get some new ideas to share with their families. Be sure to emphasize the spiritual character of the season.*

### **Go Deeper:**

During Advent, we not only prepare for Christmas, we remember the Three Comings of Christ: His coming in history, His coming in mystery, and His coming in majesty.

- 1) Christ's coming in history: This refers to Jesus's coming to us in the Incarnation. Remember, this actually occurred nine months before Christmas at the Annunciation, but people could see and adore Him at His birth. Read Matthew's Christmas narrative – Matthew 1:18-2:12. Lead the students in a discussion about the beauty of this coming of Christ.
- 2) Christ's coming in mystery – This refers to Jesus coming to us every day in the Eucharist. Read John 6:48-58, and discuss the beauty of this coming of Christ.
- 3) Christ's coming in majesty – This refers to Jesus's return in glory at the end of time. Read Matthew 25:31-40, and discuss the beauty of this coming of Christ.

## **Activity:**

You will be making an Advent calendar! This Advent, as you prepare to celebrate the birth of our Lord, each day you will be giving Jesus a little gift. It could be a prayer, a sacrifice, or a kind act. On the attached calendar, write down what you will do each day to spiritually prepare for Christmas. For example, perhaps one day you will pray the Rosary; on another you may read the Bible for 10 minutes; maybe you will give up television one day; on another you might do your sister's chores. Each morning of Advent, check your calendar and perform the act on that day. You may repeat your ideas, and remember, these are offerings to Jesus.

## **Closing Prayer:**

**Leader:** Lord, we thank you for coming to us. Help us to wait faithfully this Advent, to celebrate your birth. Help us to appreciate the wonderful gift you have given us in the Eucharist. And may we be prepared to welcome You when You come again. Amen.

**Together:** Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.