



CELEBRATING AT HOME  
1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

*Stay awake! Your liberation is near (Luke 21:25-28, 34-36).*



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### Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

The Lord is here, present among us.  
**We are gathered with the whole Church in this  
moment of prayer.**

### Preparing to hear the Word

We begin this holy season of Advent  
prayerfully preparing to discover again  
the great gift Christ is to us.

We are filled with hopeful longing,  
with a sense of urgency.

**We are the clay, you are the potter, Lord.  
Continue to fashion us  
in your image and likeness.**

### Blessing the Advent Wreath

We ask God's blessing on us and on this wreath,  
symbol of hope, love and promise.

**Loving and gracious God,  
we praise you for sending your Son, Jesus Christ  
to be our Light.**

In the wonder of his incarnation,  
through the sorrow of his cross,  
and by his glorious resurrection  
he has saved us and become the light in our darkness.

**In our baptism his light was entrusted to us.  
Bless this wreath, symbol of your unending love.  
As we prepare to celebrate the mystery  
of his coming among us may we become  
light, peace and hope for one another.  
We ask this in the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen.**

### Lighting of the first candle

Christ, our Light,  
from the tree of Jesse you spring into our humanity  
and bring your kingdom of peace.

**Come and strengthen us now so that we may bring  
your gift of love and healing to all around us.**

May this candle remind us of your love,  
enlighten our minds,  
and open our hearts to welcome you  
who are our Lord, for ever and ever. Amen.

*As the candle is lit, all say:*  
**Maranatha, Come Lord Jesus!**

### Scripture Reading (Luke 21:25-28, 34-36)

Jesus said to his disciples: 'There will be signs in the sun and moon and stars; on earth nations in agony, bewildered by the clamour of the ocean and its waves; men dying of fear as they await what menaces the world, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand erect, hold your heads high, because your liberation is near at hand.'

'Watch yourselves, or your hearts will be coarsened with debauchery and drunkenness and the cares of life, and that day will be sprung on you suddenly, like a trap. For it will come down on every living man on the face of the earth. Stay awake, praying at all times for the strength to survive all that is going to happen, and to stand with confidence before the Son of Man.'

### Reflection - *Stay Awake! Your liberation is near!*

The great Advent journey begins. The Advent readings are a rich tapestry of images centered on the truth that God has come among us. We do not pretend that we are waiting for Jesus to be born in a stable. That happened once, a long time ago, and it will not happen again. We remember that birth as we remember our own birthdays.

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The God who came among us is still among us. Advent's invitation is to become aware of the all-pervading presence of the risen Jesus as Emmanuel – God among us.

In the first reading this Sunday Jeremiah looks forward to the coming of one who will save God's people, one who acts with honesty and integrity. In the second reading St Paul encourages the people of Thessalonica in their following of Christ. He prays that their love will grow and that their hearts will be 'confirmed in holiness'. The early Christians believed that Jesus would return very soon as the Lord of Glory.

As time passed, they had to re-think this belief and work out how to live in the meantime, the time in between the first and final comings of Christ. That's our challenge, too.

Today's Gospel from St Luke warns Christians not to be distracted by the cares and snares of the world, but to be ready to stand confidently before the Son of Man when he comes. Remaining constant in love and attentive to our calling we become the living presence of Jesus until he comes again.

### Lord's Prayer

Formed by the teaching and example of Jesus, we pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come.  
Thy will be done on earth  
as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.**

### Blessing

May the Lord bless us,  
**keep us from all evil  
and lead us to life everlasting.  
Amen.**

### The Season of Advent

The word "advent" means appearing, arrival, to come. Advent is the Church's time of preparation for celebrating God's gift of his Son. Our liturgy will gather the great Advent themes of hope, expectation and preparation. During Advent we recall Christ's coming at Bethlehem and we look forward to his second coming at the end of time. Advent is a season of joyful expectation.

The predominant colour during Advent is purple. Unlike Lent, Advent is not a penitential season. The purple colour represents hope, expectation and healing. It is one of the royal colours. We are preparing to welcome the King, the "sun of justice" who "will shine out with healing in its rays". (Mal 4:2 NRSV, 3:20 Jerusalem)

The custom of the Advent Wreath began in Germany in the 16th century. It symbolises the many years that the people of Israel waited in darkness for the coming of the expected Saviour. The light of the wreath grows steadily during our Advent prayer.

Advent has two parts. The first two Sundays focus on preparing for Jesus' return at the end of time. The second two Sundays focus on preparing to celebrate the anniversary of Jesus' birth.

The Gospels of the Sundays in Advent have four great movements: 1. Stay Awake! 2. Prepare! 3. Rejoice! and 4. Receive!

Advent is a journey from **Maranatha! Come, Lord Jesus!** to **Emmanuel. God-is-with-us!**

*Light and  
Love in the  
darkness*



This resource is presented by the Carmelites for use by individuals, families and small groups as a prayerful celebration of the Word of God to help prepare us to celebrate the Eucharist with our worshipping communities. We are conscious that Christ is present not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in the Scriptures and in our hearts. We are also conscious of the many people who, for various reasons including sickness and infirmity, cannot physically attend the Eucharist. Even when we are on our own we remain part of the Body of Christ.

In the room you decide to use for this prayer you could have a lighted candle, a crucifix and the Bible. These symbols help keep us mindful of the sacredness of our time of prayer and can help us feel connected with our local worshipping communities.

This text is arranged with parts for a leader and for all to pray, but the leader's parts can be shared among those present.

As you use this prayer know that the Carmelites will be remembering in our prayer all the members of our family.



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