

ORDER FOR THE BLESSING OF AN ADVENT WREATH

This rite, taken from the Book of Blessings, may be used by a family to bless its Advent Wreath at home.

INTRODUCTION

1509 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, a celebration of the word of God, or Evening Prayer.

1510 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.

1511 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.

1514 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.

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1537 All make the sign of cross as the minister says:

Our help is in the name of the Lord.

All reply: Who made heaven and earth.

1538 One of those present or the minister reads a text of sacred Scripture, for example:

Brothers and sisters, listen to the words of the prophet Isaiah: 9:1–2, 5–6

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
Upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom
a light has shone.
You have brought them abundant joy
and great rejoicing,
As they rejoice before you as at the harvest,
as men make merry when dividing spoils.
For a child is born to us, a son is given us;
upon his shoulder dominion rests.
They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero,

Father-Forever, Prince of Peace.
His dominion is vast
and forever peaceful,
From David's throne, and over his kingdom,
which he confirms and sustains
By judgment and justice,
both now and forever.

1539 A minister who is a priest or deacon says the prayer of blessing with hands outstretched; a lay minister says the prayer with hands joined.

Lord God,
your Church joyfully awaits the coming of its Savior,
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 splendor of Christ,
who is Lord, for ever and ever.

R/. Amen.

1540 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 Savior 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.

R/. Amen.

The first candle is lighted.

1535 A lay minister concludes the rite by signing himself or herself with the sign of the cross and saying:

May the light of Christ lead us to the joy of his kingdom, now and for ever.

R/. Amen.