



Sunday Gospel Background

This Sunday, the Church begins preparing for the feast of Christmas, the celebration of God becoming human. Advent also calls us to prepare for Jesus' coming in glory at the end of time. Being ready for Christ's Second Coming is the theme of Sunday's Gospel.

Share Experiences

Check off the boxes as you complete each part of the lesson.

- Pray together** "Jesus, we are getting ready to celebrate your birthday at Christmas. We know you came to be with us because you love us. We love you too. Come, Lord Jesus. Amen."
- Word of the Week • Church Year (page 4)** Help your child locate the Word of the Week on page 4. Explain that we start a new Church Year on the First Sunday of Advent. Share this definition: *The Church Year helps us remember and celebrate Jesus' life.*
- Cover Activity • Advent Is a Time to Get Ready (page 1)** Invite your child to read the captions. Discuss the photos by asking questions such as: What is the child waiting for? What do we wait for during Advent? What colors are the candles? What kind of songs might the girl be singing? What do you think is in the gift box?
- Story • We Get Ready for Christmas (page 2)** Have your child look at the photos as you share the story.

Todd and Kayla were two children who had a big problem. Christmas was too far away. "I want Christmas to be tomorrow," Todd told his mom. "Why can't we have our presents now?" Kayla asked her dad. "Christmas is four weeks away," Mom said. "This is only the first Sunday of Advent." Kayla whined, "I want Christmas to come fast." Dad and Mom didn't know what to do with such impatient children.

That night after supper, Dad cleared a space on the kitchen table. He put down a big piece of paper. He used a ruler to make lines going across the paper and then lines going up and down. "You are making a calendar," Todd guessed. "Yes, I am,"

Dad said. "I am making an Advent calendar. It will help make Christmas come faster." Dad wrote the days of the week across the top of the calendar page and put numbers in the squares.

"Now we need to fill in the squares," Dad said. "What is something you like about getting ready for Christmas?" Todd said, "I like baking Christmas cookies." Kayla said, "I like putting up the Nativity scene." Mom said, "I like getting Christmas cards from our friends and family. I even like writing Christmas cards." Dad smiled. "You have the right idea. We will write all those ideas and more on our Advent calendar. When we do them all, Christmas will be here."

Ask: What would you add to the Advent calendar? Look at each of the squares in the calendar on page 2, starting with the single candle at the top left and the picture next to it. The boy is lighting one candle for the first Sunday of Advent. Have your child color the flame on the single candle.

Continue through the Advent calendar square by square, identifying the actions that are happening or the saint you will learn about later in the lesson. Keep this calendar visible throughout Advent. As your family does the actions, have your child color the frame around the corresponding picture. (The actions do not have to be done on the days specified.)



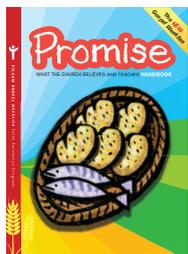
Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Will Come Again** The Gospel for the First Sunday of Advent is always about Jesus' Second Coming in glory at the end of time. This can be confusing for children, who do not yet have a sense of long periods of time. Introduce this Gospel by reviewing the Gospel stories from the October and November *Promise* lessons. Explain that Jesus knew he wouldn't be around all the time to tell us stories and answer questions. Here is what he said:

Jesus told his friends that he would come again. He said: "Get ready! Pay attention! You do not know when this time will be. It will be like a man who puts his servants in charge

when he goes on a trip. He gives them work to do. He tells them to always be ready for him to come home. Do not let me find you sleeping when you should be working."

Ask: What can we do to get ready for Jesus? What will Jesus want to know when he comes again? What would you like to be doing when Jesus comes?



- Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 18. **Ask:** What are some of your favorite celebrations that you look forward to every year? Then look at the Church Year calendar together. Note that it is full of holy days and holy times. Help your child find the Sundays of Advent and the days of Christmas.

Talk about the pictures for the matching activity for Advent and Christmas. Help your child understand that we light one candle of the Advent wreath each Sunday of Advent until the fourth Sunday, when we light all four candles. As the light from the Advent wreath grows, we get closer to Christmas.

Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Promise, pages 3–4.

Live the Gospel

- Activity • Advent Booklet (pages 3-4, top)** Show your child how to make the one horizontal cut on the heavy black line. Set aside the Advent wreath activity. Show how to fold the page to make a booklet. Invite your child to open the booklet and together, read the stories of the saints.

Conclude this activity by reading the instructions to the word search on the back page of the booklet. Offer help if you notice your child struggling to find the hidden words.
- Activity • Our Class Advent Wreath (pages 3-4, bottom)** You can adjust the activity for home use in several ways. You can turn the page over to the blank green square and cut out a single, circular wreath shape. Or you can make additional pinwheels using the square as a template. If you want, add four candles made from rolled paper (three violet, one rose). Place the violet candle on your wreath on the First Sunday of Advent, and so on.
- Closing Prayer** Gather around the Advent wreath. Pray the "Our Advent Prayer" from the Advent booklet together.



Parent Resources

For weekly videos, assessments, and more, scan this code or go to pflaumweeklies.com/family
Visit www.usccb.org/bible/readings to read this Sunday's Scripture