

Fr. Martin's Reflection – November 27, 2022

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Welcome to Advent – a time to prepare for the coming Christ. I know we associate Advent as a remembrance time for the 'birth of Jesus,' and so it is, but as we remember and celebrate the first coming of Jesus as a child, we must also prepare for the second coming of Jesus. We would be very foolish not to. We light the candles on our Advent wreath to mark the coming, not so much of God becoming human in the form of Jesus, but the coming of Jesus as our savior at the end of time as we know it, and to establish the new world as God desires it. As we light each candle throughout the weeks leading up to Christmas, we prayerfully invite Jesus to come and on Christmas Eve we remove all the outer candles and place the lighted candle in the center and pray: **'May you come tonight, dear Jesus, if not in person, then into our hearts.'**

I would like to give you this special blessing for Advent wreaths that you can use at home with your family.

Blessing of Advent Wreath

Each year we keep the season of Advent to prepare for the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. Each year is different – another year has passed, and we have been changed by our experiences. The world too has changed, war and peace, disasters, and new beginnings. In this season of Advent, we hope in the coming of Christ who will come with the promise of life and joy.

Advent is a season of waiting.

We all wait for things in life. Waiting unites the past, present, and future. Our waiting is always in hope and in this season of Advent, we wait in joyful hope for the coming of Christ.

Advent is a season of waiting. (Place purple candle on wreath)

Advent is a season of searching.

We search for God in the life that we live every day. We search for God in all the things that we do. We search for a joy that will last forever. God of love it is you that we search for, even without knowing it. Open our hearts that we may find you in our need.

Advent is a season of searching. (Place purple candle on wreath)

Advent is a season of welcome.

When we make someone welcome in our homes or in our school, we create a bond that is special. As Christians we believe that when we make a stranger welcome, we welcome Jesus into our lives. God our Father, we are your guests in this world that you have created. Jesus is your gift to us. Help us to make him welcome in our lives.

Advent is a season of welcome. (Place pink candle on wreath)

Advent is a season of recognition.

When we recognise someone there is clarity and understanding. In this season of Advent, we recognise God in Jesus who is coming into the world, and we recognise Jesus as a brother and friend.

Advent is a season of recognition. (Place purple candle on wreath)

Prayer of Blessing:

Lord God we are waiting to celebrate the coming of Jesus into the world. Help us as we search for you in our lives and give us a generous heart that we may make you welcome. Give us the grace to recognise you in our brothers and sisters but most especially in Jesus Christ whose coming we celebrate at Christmas.

Lord Jesus, you came so long ago into a world of hardship and poverty.

Lord have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you come in this Mass to bring you hope and healing to our hearts and lives.

Christ have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you come to other people in the kindness and care we show to those we meet.

Lord have mercy.

Have a blessed Advent – may the joy of the coming Christ strengthen you always.

Fr. Martin