

Advent Activities for the time of Pandemic

Everything is different this year, including how we celebrate this time of preparation and anticipation. Because many of our familiar rituals are unavailable to us, I am going to create a new page on our website for Advent activities and resources. **Here are some things you can do at home to mark this time** and spend time preparing your heart and mind for the coming of the Christ:

1. **Create a home Advent Wreath.** This is easier than you think, because there are few rules involved. All you need are some candles (ideally, five), and it doesn't matter if they are mis-matched, completely the same, battery operated, odd colors, scented or unscented. You can arrange them anywhere and any way you like – in a circle, in a straight line, or some other pattern. I use a small artificial wreath and arrange the candles inside that wreath, but you can add cuttings from a holly tree, cuttings from a pine tree, or anything (or nothing) that you have on hand

Each week there will be readings available on the website (beginning this weekend) for lighting your candles at home. You can also find many kinds on the internet.
2. **Create a “Jesse Tree”** to tell the story of how Jesus fulfills scripture. There is information on creating a Jesse Tree here: <https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/liturgical-year/advent/the-jesse-tree/>. I will also put that link on the web site.
3. **Do daily Advent devotionals.** In this mailing is the first week's devotionals for Advent. We will send these out weekly, and they will also be available on our web site. This is not the only option. There are lots of books printed for use during Advent. This year I am using John Pavlovitz's “Low,” which seems like a good choice for a year when good news of great joy seems harder to come by. (I can give you the link for this book, and some other suggestions if you are interested.
4. **Use your “Star Word”** to meditate on Advent and how this time/season can bring you closer to God. I've included star words in this mailing. If you want a different word, or want additional words for family members, let me know and I'll send them out. Believe it or not, I actually try and keep these as random as possible so that I am not choosing your word for you.

If you have ideas about home Advent activities, please share them. And TAKE PICTURES and e mail, text, message them to me/the church and we will make them part of our congregational celebration.