

Sacred Heart Parish Family Advent Fair

Sunday, November 20, 2016

10:45am in the Parish Hall



On Sunday November 20, our Faith Formation classes will be held in the Parish Hall for our Family Advent Fair. If your child is enrolled in Religious Education classes, your entire family is invited to attend the Advent Fair and make your own Advent Wreath. Lighting the candles on your Advent Wreath at home with the children is a way to bring your own family in closer union with our entire parish family, and the whole Church. We hope the Advent Wreath can help you understand that Advent is a time of Waiting, Longing, Preparation and Penance. The proper celebration of Advent will bring a new and deeper meaning to the glories of the Christmas Season!

Advent is the beginning of a new liturgical year for the Church. It begins each year on the Sunday closest to November 30th, which is the feast day of Saint Andrew the Apostle. So this year on November 27th, the Church celebrates its own kind of New Year's Day. There are so many traditions associated with Advent. Since the 1500's people have used the **ADVENT WREATH** to help remind them of the rich meaning of this time of year.

THE ADVENT WREATH

Since circles have no beginning and no end, the circular shape of many Advent wreaths is used to symbolize God the Father and eternal life. The wreath (or candleholder) holds four Advent candles which are lit one by one throughout the four weeks of Advent. The burning flame is a visual reminder that Christ is "the light of the world." (John 8:12)

There are three violet (purple) candles and one rose (pink) candle, each representing 1,000 years. Added together, the four candles symbolize the 4,000 years that humanity waited for the Savior. Violet is a liturgical color that is used to signify a time of penance, sacrifice, and prayer. During the first, second, and fourth weeks of Advent we light violet candles.

The Third Sunday of Advent is called Gaudete (Latin for "Rejoice") Sunday. On this day we celebrate that our wait for Christmas is almost over. Rose is a liturgical color that is used to signify joy, so we light the rose candle on Gaudete Sunday.



MEANING OF THE CANDLES

Traditionally, each of the four candles on an Advent wreath has their own meaning. The first Sunday of Advent symbolizes **Hope**, with the "**Prophet's Candle**" reminding us that Jesus is coming.

The second Sunday of Advent symbolizes **Faith**, with the "**Bethlehem Candle**" reminding us of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem.

The third Sunday of Advent symbolizes **Joy**, with the "**Shepherd's Candle**" reminding us of the Joy the world experienced at the coming birth of Jesus.

The fourth Sunday symbolizes **Peace** with the "**Angel's Candle**" reminding us of the message of the angels: "Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace to men of good will."

When Advent Wreaths are decorated, the materials often have symbolic meaning.

The use of evergreens reminds us of our eternal life with Christ; holly represents the crown of thorns from the Passion of Jesus; and pine cones symbolize Christ's Resurrection.



Celebrating Advent with an Advent Wreath is a great way to keep children focused on preparing for the coming of the Christ Child rather than on materialistic desires. Each new week of Advent begins at Mass with the lighting of a new candle on the parish's Advent wreath. Our parish family is connected to our own family when we light our Advent Wreath at home.

