

The Catholic tradition of the Advent wreath dates back to the Middle Ages and pre-Christian Germanic and Scandinavian cultures. The evergreen wreath signifies life and renewal, with the circular shape symbolizing the eternity of God and the everlasting life found in Christ. The four candles, three purple and one rose, represent the four weeks of Advent. Their light symbolizes Christ as the light of the world, and the progressive lighting of the candles over the weeks of Advent symbolizes the expectation and hope of His coming. This beautiful tradition encourages us to renew our faith and reflect in preparation for Christmas Day.

Advent Prayers

Advent Wreath Prayer

Emmanuel, God-with-us,
In anticipation and hope this Advent season,
We look forward to Christmas Day
As we prepare to welcome Christ into our hearts.

As we reflect on the past year,
We ask Your forgiveness
For those times we failed to live according to your will.
Forgive us for failing to welcome the stranger,
For walking past a person in need,
For remaining complacent in the face of injustice,
For praying to You only in times of trouble,
For doubting Your word,
For acting out of self-interest,
And for closing our hearts.

Illuminate for us the path of righteousness
As we light these candles in Your name.
Set our hearts aflame,
So that we too may go forth and set the world on fire.
Call us to serve the common good,
Ground us in Your presence,
And renew our spirits.

On this Advent journey,
We are reminded of Your love and mercy,
We give you thanks for bringing Light into the world,
And we rejoice in the promise of everlasting life. Amen.



Prayer for the First Week of Advent

God of Mercy and Compassion,
As we light this candle, we pray to You for strength.
Make us aware of the human rights violations
Occurring throughout the world,
And move our hearts to action.
In the face of so much pain and suffering,
Let our hope and faith continue to burn bright,
So that we can achieve a world of justice and peace. Amen.

Prayer for the Second Week of Advent

God of All That Lives,
We give thanks for the sacred beauty of our natural world,
And ask Your forgiveness for our sins against the environment.
We pray that we may become better stewards of all creation,
And we pray especially for the indigenous and Native communities,
Whose rights and way of life depend so strongly on the integrity of the earth. Amen.

Prayer for the Third Week of Advent

God of Acceptance and Compassion,
As we light these candles, we pray for an end to gendered and sexual violence.
Give us the resolve to eradicate our culture of silence,
Guide us to speak out against victim-blaming, and help us to become stronger advocates.
We pray for those who have suffered human trafficking and sexual violence,
That they find healing and justice,
And encounter Your joy and love. Amen.

Prayer for the Fourth Week of Advent

God of Welcome and Hope,
You so loved the world that You sent us Your one and only Son.
As we celebrate Christ's coming with joy in our hearts,
We remember the millions of refugees, migrants, and internally-displaced persons
Who come in search of life.
We pray for those who have been pushed from their homelands and live in fear.
We pray for their safety and the alleviation of their suffering,
And we pray for a change of heart in those who would turn them away. Amen.

— Irene Koo

