

*Advent time in parish
Ideas for Advent 2010*



This Advent is an opportunity for parishes and parishioners to be still and recognise God who is here with us. In a time of great change and upheaval, we surely need to hear the Advent message in a special way this year – A light shines in the darkness!!

Here are some possible parish opportunities for connection and reflection. Please consider one or two for your parish – congratulations on all your parish is already making possible:

- Advent wreath:

- For family homes

Create an advent wreath from a round of green and 4 candles

Gather, as a family, on Sunday evenings for 20 minutes to light the candles each week.

Prayer: *Dear Jesus, we know that you love us and are with us. We want to keep our eyes and our hearts open this week, so that we will see your love and your joy in the world as we prepare for Christmas. We light this candle to remind us that you, the light of the world, are here with us tonight and always.*

Each child gets the opportunity (with adult supervision) to light the candle. Never leave a candle burning unattended at any time, for any reason. Sing a verse of ‘O come o come Emmanuel’ or ‘Cead mile failte romhat’ to finish the prayer time

- Advent reflections on the Sunday Gospel

- ‘Taking our hearts to the Lord’ reflection booklets are available in several parishes. Here in the Pastoral Centre, the 4 nights of prayer will be offered on Tuesdays in Advent, beginning on Tuesday 30th November.
- Inform parishioners of websites like SacredSpace.ie where they can find simple Gospel based daily prayer, which they can access at their office desk, their kitchen counter or even from their phone!

- Advent reflections on Advent themes

- Search the web for resources – there is so much available at your fingertips if you take 30 minutes to search! For example, see the *Liturgy of Hope Advent Service* which was created by the Faith development team in the diocese of Kildare & Leighlin: www.kandle.ie/2010/11/12/liturgy-hope-2010-resources/
- Advent/Christmas Carol service. An ideal opportunity for a parish to gather, pray and give thanks. Invite local choirs, schools, parish groups to come along and sing together. This is also a great opportunity for ecumenical prayer with our fellow Christians.

- Advent reconciliation service

- Parishes in Pastoral Areas can work together to organise dates for these gatherings so there is no clash. Perhaps parishes could come together for one service? Several resources for such services are offered each Autumn.