

## Introduction

Advent, is the season that starts the 'Church's new year' and season of waiting. Advent prepares us for the festival of Christmas. We are asked to "stay awake" to the real meaning of Christmas.

Waiting for Christmas can be difficult. So, instead of just sitting there or jumping about and hoping that Christmas will come soon, we break the waiting up – there are things to do, concerts to prepare for, cards to write. Another way we mark out our waiting is the Advent Wreath. It marks out the weeks for us, one by one.

(Using Advent candles, tell the children that we will light a candle each week and let them burn for the duration of the assemblies, until all four are lit. We will light the central, white one on the last day before we break up for Christmas. In churches, this candle is lit on Christmas day. What do you think it stands for?)



We now bless our Advent Wreath, so we pray.

Student: Today we begin the season of Advent. We are preparing to celebrate at Christmas the birth of Jesus, who is the light of the world. As we light our first candle, we remember, what we hope for at this time of 'good-will'(pause).

Student: Lord God, bless this wreath and bless us as well. (together we all make the sign of the cross) May this wreath remind us of the hope and joy that Jesus brings into the world. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

## 1 Corinthians 13 – A Christmas Version

If I decorate my house perfectly with bows and twinkling lights, but do not show love to my family, I'm just another decorator.

If I slave away in the kitchen, baking Christmas cookies, preparing meals and arranging a beautiful table at mealtime, but do not show love to my family, I'm just another cook.

If I work at the homeless, sing carol in the nursing home and give all that I have to charity, but do not show love to my family, it profits me nothing.

If I attend a many holiday parties and sing in the school choir but do not focus on Jesus, I have missed the point.

Love stops the cooking to hug the child. Love is kind, though harried and tired. Love doesn't envy another's home that has coordinated Christmas decorations

Love doesn't give only to those who are able to give in return but rejoices in giving to those who can't.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never fails. Games will good one week and not the next, jewellery will be lost or forgotten, but giving the gift of LOVE will endure.

(Adapted from Sharon Jaynes - Apple Seeds)

## Reflection Quiet

### Intercessions:

1. We await your coming and with joyful hearts we pray:  
**All: Come, Lord Jesus.**
2. You come to bring us hope and courage:  
**All: May our actions of justice and care reflect this same love.**
3. You come as a reflection of God's love:  
**All: May our actions of justice and care reflect this same love.**
4. You come to show us ways of compassion and mercy:  
**All: May we reach out to all people in our society with that same spirit of compassion and mercy.**

### Conclusion:

We stand to pray Jesus's prayer ... Our Father...

In the name of the Father...