



Children's liturgy – First Sunday of Advent

Welcome: Today is the first Sunday of Advent. Advent is a special time when we get ready for the coming of Jesus. It is very exciting when we know that someone is coming to visit us. We make sure that we are ready when they come. Today we are going to think about what it means to be welcoming, and how we get ready to welcome Jesus.

Opening prayer: Loving God, you sent your Son Jesus into the world to show us how to live. Help us to be ready when he comes. Help us to make all visitors feel welcome and cared for. Amen.

Gospel: Matthew 24:37-44

Jesus said to his disciples: "The coming of the Son of Man will be like what happened in the time of Noah. In the days before the flood people ate and drank, men and women married, up to the very day Noah went into the boat; yet they did not realize what was happening until the flood came and swept them all away. That is how it will be when the Son of Man comes. At that time two men will be working in a field: one will be taken away, the other will be left behind. Two women will be at a mill grinding meal: one will be taken away, the other will be left behind.

Watch out, then, because you do not know what day your Lord will come. If the owner of a house knew the time when the thief would come, you can be sure that he would stay awake and not let the thief break into his house. So then, you also must always be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you are not expecting him."

Gospel reflection: What do you remember from today's reading?

The gospel story is telling us that we must be ready when Jesus comes again, but that we cannot be exactly sure when that will be, so we must try to be ready all the time. (Although we don't have to stay awake all night, we can go to sleep!)

Jesus tells us we may be very surprised when he comes. Lots of surprises are very good. Birthday or special treats make us feel happy.

Sometimes people surprise us by coming to visit us at home when we are not expecting them. Or we might go to visit members of our family or our friends.

How does it feel to go somewhere for the first time? What would you like others to do to make you feel welcome if you were going somewhere new?

And how can we make other people feel welcome? How can we welcome them in our homes? In our school? In our church?

Jesus asks to be ready when he comes again. How do you think we can get ready to welcome Jesus in our lives?

Is it just about buying presents and putting up Christmas trees?

Are there other things we need to do? (eg sharing with others, being kind, helping other people).

What will you do this week to make sure you are ready when Jesus comes?

Activity

Look at the accompanying activity sheet and the picture of people welcoming a visitor. What is different in the picture from their house or family? What is the same? Colour in the picture and to do the accompanying activity think about what you can do to make people feel welcome.

Remember to share all that you have heard and thought about in the liturgy today with your grown ups. Do at least one thing in the coming week to share Christ's love with others.



Circle the things that you could do to make someone feel welcome.

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| • Smile | • Shake hands | • Listen |
| • Turn away | • Ignore them | • Hide |
| • Say hello | • Share | • High five |

Advent wreath

Did you see the first candle on the Advent wreath being lit today? This is one way that we show we are getting ready to welcome Jesus.

Make your own wreath:

- 1.** Cut a hole in the middle of a paper plate
- 2.** Draw around your hands on green recycled paper and ask others to do the same
- 3.** Stick the cut-out hands around the outside of the paper plate to make the leaves
- 4.** Make four candles by rolling paper into tubes (3 purple and 1 pink)
- 5.** Attach a paper flame to one candle on each Sunday of Advent

Use our online Advent calendar for children: cafod.org.uk/primary