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## BLESSING OF AN ADVENT WREATH

The Advent wreath is made of four candles and a circle of branches. Before the first candle is lighted, the household gathers for this blessing.

*All make the sign of the cross. The leader begins:*

Our help is in the name of the Lord.

*All respond:*

Who made heaven and earth.

*The leader may use these or similar words to introduce the blessing.*

In the short days and long nights of Advent, we realize how we are always waiting for deliverance, always needing salvation by our God. Around this wreath, we shall remember God's promise.

*Then the Scripture is read:*

Listen to the words of the prophet Isaiah:

The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
Upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom  
a light has shone.  
You have brought them abundant joy  
and great rejoicing.

Isaiah 9:1-2

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*(The family's Bible may be used for an alternate reading, such as Isaiah 63:16-17 or Isaiah 64:2-7.)*

*The reader concludes:*

The Word of the Lord.

*All respond:*

Thanks be to God.

*After a time of silence, all join in prayers of intercession and the in the Lord's Prayer.*

*Then the leader invites:*

Let us now pray for God's blessings upon us and upon this wreath.

*After a short silence, the leader prays:*

Lord our God,  
we praise you for your Son, Jesus Christ:  
he is Emmanuel, the hope of the peoples,  
he is the wisdom that teaches and guides us,  
he is the Savior of every nation.

Lord God,  
let your blessing come upon us  
as we light the candles of this wreath.  
May the wreath and its light  
be a sign of Christ's promise to bring us salvation.  
May he come quickly and not delay.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**R. Amen.**

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*The first candle is then lighted.*

*The leader says:*

Let us bless the Lord.

*All respond, making the sign of the cross:*

Thanks be to God.

*The blessing concludes with a verse from  
"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel":*

O come, desire of nations, bind  
In one the hearts of humankind;  
Bid ev'ry sad divisions cease  
And by thyself our Prince of peace.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

*Each day in Advent, perhaps at the evening meal  
(see prayer on page 64 of "Catholic Household  
Blessings and Prayers,") the candles are lighted:  
one candle the first week, two the second, and so forth.*

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