



***St. Joseph's Church, Gander
St. Anne's Church, Glenwood
Prayers and Activities for 2023***

What is Advent?

Advent is a season of four weeks of preparation before Christmas. The word Advent is derived from the Latin word 'adventus' which means 'coming' and refers to the coming of Jesus Christ.

The season celebrates the various comings of Christ:

In **HISTORY** at Bethlehem;

In **MYSTERY** through Word and Sacrament in Eucharist;

In **MAJESTY** at the end of time!

Many people expend great energy preparing for Christmas, yet fail to appreciate the true meaning of the season. Advent, if properly observed, can change all that, helping us to realize more fully what the coming of Christ can mean in our lives.



God Bless All Families!



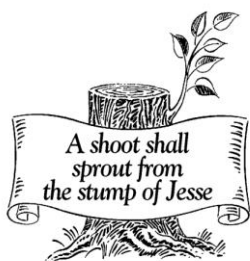


FAMILY ADVENT WREATH – The Advent Wreath is one way of helping us to prepare at home for Christmas. The single wreath includes four candles in a circle, a new candle being lit on each of the four Sundays of Advent. It also includes a white candle, which stands for Jesus. It is lit only on Christmas Day. The evergreen in a circle represents God's love that has no beginning and no end.

BLESSING FOR THE FAMILY ADVENT WREATH - As we anticipate the birth of Jesus let us prepare a joyful home for His arrival, the Son of God, who will come in love to save us. Ask a family member to pray this prayer:
"Bless us, Almighty God, as we gather in the name of your beloved son. Bless this wreath as a sign of his coming in final judgment. May our Advent preparation yield the intimate friendship with you that will allow us to greet the Lord Jesus when he comes in joy."



KRIS KINDLE PROGRAM – This spiritual exercise will begin on the weekend of the First Sunday of Advent (December 2nd & 3rd). Kris represents Christ and Kindle represents the kindling of a new friendship. During the weeks of Advent someone will pray for you and you are asked to pray for the name you have picked. You are encouraged to contact your 'Kris Kindle' and wish them a Merry Christmas! (**Kris Kindle slips will be distributed as you enter the Church and you can pick a name from the basket as you leave.**)



JESSE TREE (Advent Tree) – One of the favorite symbols of children as they think of Advent is the Jesse Tree. It reminds them how people waited for thousands of years for Christ Jesus to come and how we now wait for his coming at Christmas. Jesse was the father of King David and as such, was the ancestor of many people, of a long line of kings and eventually of Jesus himself. Our Jesse Tree will have food item cards placed on it. Each week during Advent we invite parish members to

take a card from the tree, before or after Mass, and bring that food item to Church the following weekend. All food collected will be given to our local Food Bank.

ADVENT PENANCE SERVICE – A communal penance service, with the opportunity for individual reconciliation, will be celebrated in St. Joseph's Church on Wednesday, December 13th at 7 p.m. All are encouraged to participate.

FAMILY WREATH MAKING – Our Parish will have a family wreath making day following the 11:00 a.m. Mass on Sunday, **December 17th** in the McCarthy Centre. The parish invites individuals/families/groups who wish to make a family wreath to be hung in the Church for Christmas, to come along and join us. The wreaths greatly enhance the beauty of our Church during Christmas. The parish will supply the frames and the evergreen boughs. Families are invited to bring their own decorations for their particular wreaths. Please come and join us in our fun as a family while ***the Knights of Columbus treat us to lunch!***



HOLY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION - During the Advent Season St. Joseph's Parish encourages parishioners to support the Holy Childhood Association through the use of the Holy Childhood Coin Banks/Envelopes. ***100% of funds collected go directly to children.*** Please give generously and put your envelope # on the coin box to receive credit for your donation. Boxes are available in the Church.

MEMORY TREE OF LIGHTS – During Christmas a tree will be placed in the Sanctuary of our Church and will be lit with bulbs donated in memory of our loved ones. Mass will be celebrated for those loved ones on Thursday, **January 4, 2024 at 7 p.m.** at which time the names of the deceased as well as the names of those requesting the Mass will be read out. If you would like to light a bulb in memory, please complete this form and with \$5.00 (for one name or one family e.g. ***John Smith or John & Mary Smith & family or the Smith family***) place it in an envelope for collection or pass into the Parish Office. We would like all the names submitted by Tuesday, January 2, 2024.

In Memory of: _____
(Please print)

Requested by: _____
(Please print)

Names submitted to St. Anne's will be read at Mass on the 2nd Sunday in January.

Advent has a two-fold purpose. It prepares us for Christmas when we recall Christ's first coming among us, and it is also a time when we look forward to his second coming at the end of the ages. Advent is a season of joyful expectation.

The time before Christmas is a real challenge for us all. Our culture emphasizes the acquisition of material things. Our Church, on the other hand, through the Liturgies, reminds us that this is not a commercial time, but a sacred time.

The four weeks of Advent have 2 main stages:

- i. The first part of Advent has an emphasis on the second coming of Christ in final judgment and on our preparation in joyful hope.
- ii. The latter part of Advent directs us toward the first coming of the Son of God among us as one of us, truly God and truly human. The Lord Jesus came in love to save us and to make us the people of God.

During Advent, each Sunday's Gospel reading has a specific focus. The Old Testament readings, especially those taken from Isaiah, are prophecies about the Messiah and messianic times. The selections from the writings of the Apostles present exhortations and instructions on different themes of this season.

