

## Children's liturgy – First Sunday of Advent (Year C)

### Preparing for worship

**Colour:** purple

**Props:** Advent wreath

**Song suggestions:** My soul in stillness waits (111, Laudate)

**Welcome:** Today is the first day of Advent. Advent is a special time when we wait in hope for the coming of Jesus. Let's think a bit more about the things we wait for and what we hope for today.

**Opening prayer:** Dear God, because you love us so much you sent your only Son into the world to be with us. Help us to wait in hope with joyful hearts for his coming and to share your hope with others. Amen.

**First reading (optional):** Jeremiah 33:14-16

**Psalm:** Psalm 24:4-5, 8-9, 10, 14

**Gospel acclamation:** *Everyone stands and sings the acclamation together.*

**Gospel:** Luke 21:25-28, 34-36

"There will be strange things happening to the sun, the moon, and the stars. On earth whole countries will be in despair, afraid of the roar of the sea and the raging tides. People will faint from fear as they wait for what is coming over the whole earth, for the powers in space will be driven from their courses. Then the Son of Man will appear, coming in a cloud with great power and glory. When these things begin to happen, stand up and raise your heads, because your salvation is near."

"Be on your guard. Don't let yourselves become occupied with too much feasting and drinking and with the worries of this life, or that Day may suddenly catch you like a trap. For it will come upon all people everywhere on earth. Be on the alert and pray always that you will have the strength to go safely through all those things that will happen and to stand before the Son of Man."

*(Gospel passage taken from Good News Translation® and used with permission\*)*

**Gospel reflection:** *This can be a confusing reading for children because it is about the Second Coming rather than Jesus' birth. Perhaps explain this briefly before discussing.*

What do you remember from today's reading?

Jesus is talking about when he will come again. Can you remember what he said to his disciples?

Jesus says that he will come again in a cloud with power and great glory. Do we know when Jesus will come again?

Even though we do not know the exact time when Jesus will come again, he says that we need to be ready. We have to wait and watch for him.

What's the most exciting thing you've ever had to wait for? Was it the visit of a friend or family member? Was it for a special treat? How did it feel while you were waiting? Did the time go quickly or slowly? What did you do while you were waiting?

Waiting is not easy, is it? Especially if we don't know when the thing or the person we are waiting for will arrive.

We do not know when Jesus will come again, but in today's gospel Jesus tells us to pray and to watch how we behave while we are waiting, so that we will be ready when he comes. How do you think Jesus wants us to behave? How do you think he would like us to treat other people both here and around the world?

Jesus asks us to love one another and to treat other people as we want to be treated. Whether they're in our own family or on the other side of the world.

What will you do this week, so that you can try to be ready when Jesus comes again?

The other thing that is special about waiting for Jesus during Advent is hope. We have hope that Jesus will one day come again and make all things new. We have hope because of his birth long ago in a stable in Bethlehem, when he came to show all people God's love for us.

Hope is not just a wish for good things to come in the future. It also changes the way that we feel and think and act. When things are hard, if we have hope that they will get better in the future, that helps us to keep trying and working to change things. And this then often leads to the difficult situation getting better.

We can share hope with others, by being with them in difficult times, by giving them a smile or a hug, or by helping them with something that is hard.

CAFOD is part of a big Church network that helps to bring hope to people all around the world by working with them to build a better future for themselves and for their families.

Guti lives in Uganda. Girls in Uganda often don't go to school or they miss lessons because they are expected to help fetch water. Even when Gutti did get to go to school, it was very difficult as there was no water supply in school. Until a project supported by CAFOD helped to repair the water pump and installed sinks in the school.

She says: "Before we had water in school we were thirsty and would get dirty as we had to go a long time without bathing."

Imagine you had to miss lessons to fetch water. Imagine not being able to just turn on a tap. Imagine having to wait for a drink or to wash your hands.

Guti and lots of other girls now have hope for a better future as they are able to go to school and learn. They no longer miss out because they are fetching water or because they are sick from drinking dirty water.

Guti also helps the younger children in her school learn about how important clean water and washing your hands is to stay healthy. She shares hope with others.

What is your hope this Advent? And how do you think you could bring hope to others around the world?

**Intercessions** *You may want to ask the children to offer their own prayers or you can use the suggestions below.*

As we wait for the coming of Jesus, we pray together:

We pray for all the leaders in the world: that God may give them the wisdom to treat their people with fairness and compassion, bringing hope to all. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for the Church around the world: that she may follow the example of Jesus and work to make the world a fairer place. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our communities, families and friends: that we may treat others as we would wish to be treated and always be ready to welcome Jesus into our lives. Lord, in your mercy...

**Closing prayer:** Loving God, may your love be with us always and bring peace and joy to all people around the world, as we wait in hope for the coming of your Son Jesus. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **Activity suggestions**

Share the accompanying activity sheet with the children. Invite them to decorate the bauble by drawing their Advent hope and/or how we can share hope in our world, cut it out and hang it on their tree once it is up. You could encourage them to stick the paper template to card to make it stiffer.

Light the first candle on your Advent Wreath if you have one. Use the prayer on the accompanying activity sheet to pray for your group's intentions at this time and encourage the children to take it home to pray during the week.

Encourage the children to discuss all that they have heard and thought about today with the people at home. Remind them to spend this week really thinking about what they do, so that they can try to be ready when Jesus comes and to see if they can share hope with others locally and around the world.

\*Gospel passage taken from:  
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