

## **Start-Up/Third Grade Lesson Plan**

### **Session 16 – Advent**

#### **Materials needed:**

- **Yellow “Advent” cards (in tub)**
- **Blue tape (in tub)**
- **Small candy bars (optional)**
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Grade: Advent Chains (in tub)**  
**Start Up: Advent wreaths (in tub)**
- **Scissors**

#### **Before class:**

- ✓ Read ahead in the lesson so you know how to use the yellow cards.
- ✓ Tape the “Advent” cards to the wall. Mix them up so the Advent cards are not all together.

#### **Prayer:**

Our Father/Hail Mary/Glory Be

Say:

Every year, the Catholic Church celebrates a season we call “Advent”.  
Tell me what you know about Advent...(kids may or may not know anything about the season.)

- Advent is a time to get ready for Jesus. It begins four Sundays before Christmas.
- What does it mean to “get ready for Jesus”? I thought Jesus had already come! (We get ready to celebrate the day Jesus was born.)
- What day do we celebrate Jesus’ birth? (Christmas)
- Okay, well...we all know that Christmas is Jesus’ birthday and we spend WEEKS getting ready for Christmas, right? Who needs Advent to tell me that??
- You’re right, we usually DO spend weeks getting ready for the *Christmas holiday*– shopping, cooking, wrapping, parties – all that stuff we do to get ready for the Christmas holiday.
- But when do we get ready for Jesus? (Pause here and let kids come up with an answer, if they can.)
- What do we do to get ready for Jesus coming as a baby to the earth?
- Do we plan parties for Him? Shop for gifts for Him? Bake Christmas cookies for Him? Not usually.

- **All those things we do to get ready for Christmas are good and fun things to do, but we should never let them take the place of welcoming Jesus at Christmas. And that can be very easy to do, can't it?**
- **That's where Advent comes in! There are several things we do during Advent that help us get ready for Jesus and I'm going to ask you to help me find them.**

(Show kids the cards you have taped to the wall.)

- **There are six cards in this group that name the things we do during Advent to help us remember what is really important during the Christmas season – Jesus is coming!**

(Divide the class into two teams. Let them take turns picking the cards they think have to do with Advent. Keep score and give the winning team a small candy bar to take home if you want.)

- **I'd like you to come up one at a time and pick a card that you think names something we do during Advent to help us remember that Jesus is coming. There are six of them.**

(As kids pick the cards, put the ones that apply to Advent on one side of the wall and the ones that are for other special days in our Church calendar on the other. The answers are on the back of the cards – read the answers aloud as kids pick the cards.)

*Advent cards are:*

- \* *We look forward to Jesus' second coming.*
- \* *We sing "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" each Sunday at Mass.*
- \* *We hang lanterns in the church.*
- \* *We see the color violet in the church.*
- \* *We read from the prophets who told the people that a Messiah would come.*
- \* *We light special purple and pink candles that are in a circle.*

Stretch or cookie break

After kids have picked all the cards, explain the Advent ones.

† **We look forward to Jesus' coming:**

Jesus came once as a little baby but He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and His peace and justice will fill the earth. We remember both times that Jesus will come during Advent.

† **We sing "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" every Sunday at Mass.**

"Emmanuel" means "God with us". We sing this beautiful song to ask Jesus to come once again into our hearts at Christmas and also to come with His Kingdom that will bring us everlasting safety, happiness and peace.

† **We hang lanterns in the church.**

Look around the church and you will see lanterns hanging from the pillars. This reminds us of the bridesmaids a story that Jesus told. The bridesmaids in Jesus' day had to light the way of the bridegroom to the wedding ceremony. If they were not ready with enough oil in their lamps, they would get left behind and locked out of the ceremony and the celebration.

When we look at the lanterns, we should ask ourselves if we are ready for our bridegroom (Jesus) to come again. Are we living as He taught us? Do we have to do some things to be sure we're ready for His return, just as the bridesmaids had to be sure their lamps were full of oil? Advent is a time to welcome Jesus as a baby but it is also a time to think about the day He will return.

† **We see the color violet in the church and in the priest's vestments.**

The colors we see in the church should make us stop and think about certain things. Violet reminds us to think about the ways that we are not ready for Jesus to come and to do penance (confess our sins, show others we are sorry for the things we have done, ask God for forgiveness etc.) for those things. Advent is a very good time to go to Reconciliation.

† **We read from the Prophets in the Old Testament who told the people that a Messiah would come from God to save them.**

The Prophets (men who spoke and wrote for God) told the people that a Savior would one day come. They were right!

Jesus, the Son of God, did come to save us all from our sins. We read about how the prophets accurately predicted the coming of Christ, especially during Advent.

**THIRD GRADE:**

If time, make the Advent Chains. If not, you may send them home with the kids. Explain that each link in the chain includes a bible verse that focuses on the coming of God's promised Savior – just like we have talked about today.

**START-UP:**

If time, make the Advent Wreaths that are included in your tub. The sticker booklet goes along with the wreath craft.