



*Light and
Love in the
darkness*

CELEBRATING AT HOME SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Prepare a way!
(Mark 1:1-8)

This resource is presented by the Carmelites of Australia & Timor-Leste at a time when we cannot gather together as we usually do to celebrate the Eucharist. We are conscious that Christ is present not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in our hearts. Even when we are on our own we remain part of the Body of Christ.

In the room you decide to use for this prayer you could have a lighted candle, a crucifix and the Bible. During Advent it is particularly appropriate to have an Advent Wreath in the place where you pray. These symbols help keep us mindful of the sacredness of our time of prayer and can help us feel connected with our local worshipping communities.

This text is arranged with parts for a leader and for all to pray, but the leader's parts can be shared among those present.

As you use this prayer know that the Carmelites will be remembering in our prayer all the members of our family at this time.

CELEBRATING AT HOME

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

The Lord is here, present among us.

**We are gathered with the whole Church in
this moment of prayer.**

Preparing to hear the Word

In this holy season of Advent
we prayerfully prepare to discover again
the great gift Christ is to us.

God bids us:

**“Prepare a way for the Lord in the desert,”
so that all may know God’s healing presence,
for our God is full of tenderness and love,
like a shepherd towards his flock.**

Lighting of the second Advent candle

Lord Jesus Christ, you are already in our midst,
yet we long for you to come more fully and more
deeply into our hearts.

Give us patience and hope
as we prepare for your coming.

In the desert of our fear and anxiety,
your light is calm and strong.

In the wilderness of violence and despair,
your light is peace and hope.

In the desert of narrow, darkened alleys,
your light lets us see to build anew.

In the wilderness of our hearts,
you light up our way as we prepare for you.

May this candle remind us of your presence,
which enlightens our minds,
and warms our hearts,
and shows us the way,
as we gather in the circle of its light.

As the candle is lit, all say:

Maranatha, Come Lord Jesus!

Gospel Reading – Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the Good News about Jesus
Christ, the Son of God.

It is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah:

Look, I am going to send my messenger before
you; he will prepare your way.

A voice cries in the wilderness:

Prepare a way for the Lord,
make his path straight,

and so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the
wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance
for the forgiveness of sins. All Judaea and all the
people of Jerusalem made their way to him, and as
they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they
confessed their sins.

John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on
locusts and wild honey.

In the course of his preaching he said, ‘Someone is
following me, someone who is more powerful than
I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the
strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water,
but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.’

Reflection

Repentance and forgiveness console God’s
people and prepare the way for the Lord to enter
our hearts. The magnificent first reading from
the prophet Isaiah today looks forward to the
appearance of God. Great preparations take place
for his arrival - hills are lowered, valleys filled in, a
straight highway is made in the desert. The joyful
message of God’s approach is proclaimed from the
mountain tops and shouted in the streets.

How will this God show himself to his people?
Not as a warrior-king with a frightening display of
military power or with thunderbolts in his hands,
but as a shepherd-king: feeding his flock, gathering
the lambs in his arms, holding them against his
breast and leading the mother ewes to rest. God’s
coming liberates and frees his people through
tenderness and forgiveness.

The Gospel presents John the Baptist as one who comes preparing the way for the Lord by proclaiming 'a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins'. According to Mark, all Judea and the whole of Jerusalem come to John for baptism and to hear the proclamation of forgiveness – a moment of real conversion. John says that another will come, more powerful than himself, who will baptise, not with water, but with the Holy Spirit.

Our Advent readings help us realise God's profound love for us and his presence within us through the Holy Spirit. Knowing that God will always treat us with love and tender care helps us to turn again towards him and to trust in the depth of his mercy.

Our Advent journey is showing us how to prepare our hearts for a fresh discovery of God's presence in our lives; how to recognise the hidden presence of Jesus among and around us; how to turn around and face towards God with faith, hope and love; and how to be the living presence of Jesus in our moment of history.

The candles of the Advent Wreath remind us of the growing light and warmth of God's love made visible in Christ.

Lord's Prayer

Jesus himself taught us how to pray,
so with confidence we say:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass
against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

Closing Prayer

Lord, God,
we thank you for this time together in prayer.
In your loving kindness remember your people.
You sent your son into the world
to bring healing and light.
**May we now be your light and love,
especially in this moment of need.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Blessing

May the Lord bless us,
keep us from all evil
and lead us to life everlasting.
Amen.

The Season of Advent

The word "advent" means appearing, arrival, to come. Advent is the Church's time of preparation for celebrating God's gift of his Son. Our liturgy will gather the great Advent themes of hope, expectation and preparation. During Advent we recall Christ's coming at Bethlehem and we look forward to his second coming at the end of time. Advent is a season of joyful expectation.

Advent has two parts. The first two Sundays focus on preparing for Jesus' return at the end of time. The second two Sundays focus on preparing to celebrate the anniversary of Jesus' birth.

The Gospels of the Sundays in Advent have four great movements: 1. Stay Awake! 2. Prepare! 3. Rejoice! and 4. Receive!

**Advent is a journey from
Maranatha! Come, Lord Jesus!
to
Emmanuel. God-is-with-us!**