

Time to Reflect - the Season of Advent

Advent (meaning 'Coming') - The beginning of the Church's Year

4 Sundays (not always 4 whole weeks - depends on where Christmas falls):

2022 - Christmas Day is a Sunday - 4 whole weeks of Advent

2023 - Christmas Day is a Monday - 3 weeks and 1 day

Customs and Traditions of Advent:

Advent Wreath: Circle of life; Candles; Evergreen leaves.

The Colour of vestments and church decoration is Purple, a colour of preparation;

During Mass, we refrain from singing or saying the Gloria (Glory to God in the highest) on Sundays. It is still prayed on a Feast Day or Solemnity during Advent.

Advent is a game of two halves!

Advent 1 - 1st Sunday of Advent through to 16th December (Focus on the End of Time)

Advent 2 – 17th – 24th December (Focus on Bethlehem and the birth of Christ).

Biblical Figures of Advent:

Old Testament - The Prophet Isaiah

New Testament – Zechariah and Elizabeth and their son, John the Baptist; Mary and Joseph

Themes of Advent:

Advent 1: Stay awake, Stand Ready for the Coming of the Lord

Advent 2: Prepare your heart to welcome the Song of God into the World.

The O Antiphons

During the second part of Advent, in the days leading up to the birth of Jesus, the Church prays these antiphons in the Evening Prayer of the Church and as the Gospel Acclamation at Mass.

They address Christ by different titles:

O Wisdom of our God Most High; O Leader of the House of Israel; O Root of Jesse's Stem; O Key of David; O Radiant Dawn; O King of all Nations; O Emmanuel.

It is from the O Antiphons that the well-known Advent hymn 'O Come, O Come Emmanuel' comes. Although it is always seen as an Advent hymn and sometimes sung early on in Advent, it is more properly a focus for the second half of Advent.

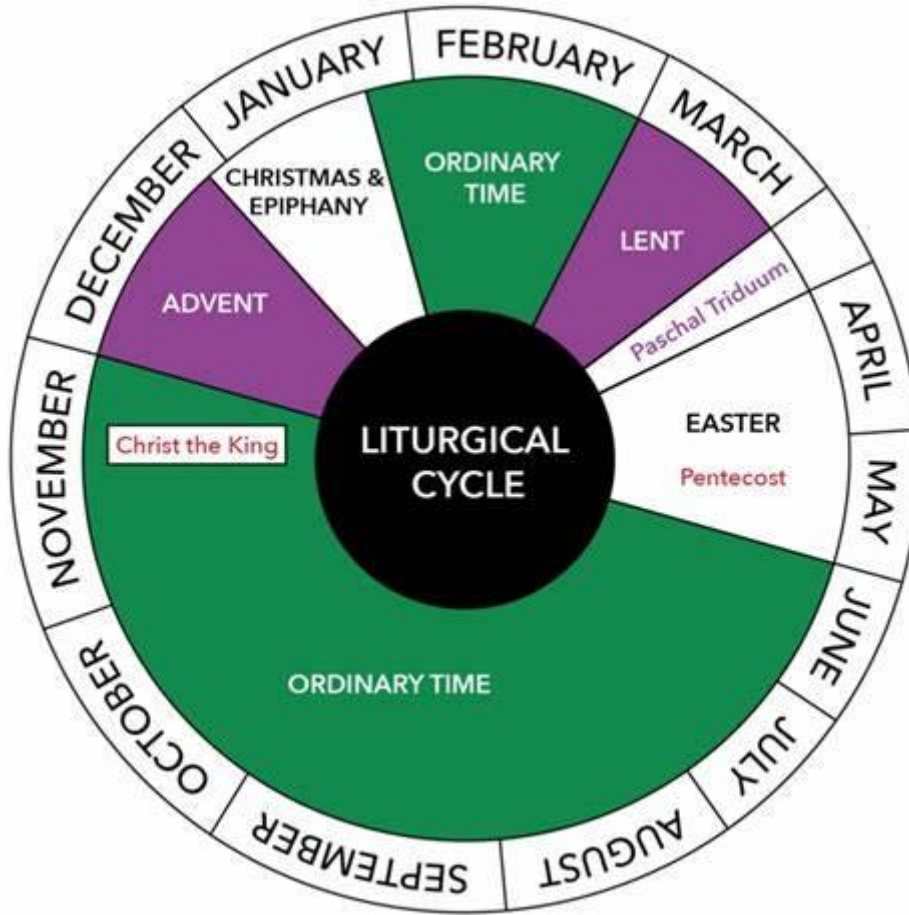
The Four Sundays of Advent (Year B) 2023

1 – Mark 13:33-37 – *Stay awake because you do not know when the master of the house is coming*

2 – Mark 1:1-8 – *Make his paths straight* (John the Baptist)

3 – John 1: 6-8, 19-28 – *There stands among you, unknown to you, the one who is coming after me*

4 – Luke 1:26-38 – *Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son.*



THE LITURGICAL YEAR

Advent (4 Sundays)

Christmas Season through to the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord (mid-January)

Ordinary Times

Lent (begins Ash Wednesday) 6 weeks

Easter Triduum: Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Easter Sunday

Easter Season: Easter Sunday to Pentecost (7 weeks)

Ordinary Time through to the end of the Liturgical Year.

Advent

For more resources to help you through the Season of Advent, please visit: [Birmingham Diocesan Trust \(birminghamdiocese.org.uk\)](http://Birmingham Diocesan Trust (birminghamdiocese.org.uk))