Light up your Advent with these Advent wreath ideas

Observe Advent (the period of four weeks before Christmas) with the help of an Advent wreath:

- **Make an Advent wreath**. If you do not own an Advent wreath, make your own as a family.
- **Bless your Advent wreath, nativity scene, and Christmas tree**. The U.S. Catholic bishops provide blessings for Advent wreaths, nativity scenes (mangers), and Christmas trees at their website and in Catholic Household Blessings & Prayers (USCCB Publishing). Or download this sheet from Teaching Catholic Kids.
- **Sing Advent songs**. "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" is an ancient hymn traditionally sung during Advent. (Consider explaining the meaning of the words to your children as you teach them this song.)
- **Chant or read the O Antiphons**. The O Antiphons are short, chanted prayers that are traditionally prayed in the evening during the last seven days of Advent (from December 17 through 23).
- **Use Advent prayer resources**. Catholic parishes typically offer a wealth of Advent prayer resources for free or a small fee. You can find additional resources at most major Catholic publishers and the USCCB Advent website.

Talk: What's an Advent wreath, anyway?



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Advent wreaths usually consist of four candles, three violet and one rose, set in a circular wreath (usually made of evergreen branches). One candle is lit for each Sunday of

Advent, with the rose candle being lit on the third Sunday (Gaudete Sunday, from the Latin word for “rejoice”). The violet (or purple) candles represent the penance and sacrifice we undertake to help us prepare for the Lord’s coming at Christmas; the rose candle represents the rejoicing of the faithful at the mid-point of Advent.