



The Catholic Women's League of Canada
PRINCE ALBERT DIOCESAN COUNCIL



National Theme: Care for Our Common Home

President: Helen Kayfish

Spiritual Advisors: Fr. Dong Doan and Fr. Maurice Fiolleau

November 2019

Spiritual Development Communiqué #4

"He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord." - Luke 1: 14 - 15

To: Parish Spiritual Development Chairpersons (for action)
Prince Albert Diocesan Officers and Chairpersons of Standing Committees (for information)
Saskatchewan Provincial Spiritual Development Chairperson (for information)
Parish Presidents (for information if you have a Spiritual Development Chairperson for your council and for action if you do not)
Provincial Communications Chairperson (for inclusion on website)

From: Lorraine Thibeault, Prince Albert Diocesan Spiritual Development Chairperson

Good Morning, Ladies and Reverend Fathers:

As we move closer to the liturgical season of Advent, I ask a blessing on each of you that you continue to "prepare the way of the Lord" in your CWL actions and in your actions with family and friends. Let us prepare ourselves to have a truly holy experience with the Lord.

Advent is a season observed in many Christian churches as a time of expectant waiting and preparation for both the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus at Christmas and the return of Jesus at the Second Coming. The term is a version of the Latin word meaning "coming".

Advent begins Sunday, December 1 and ends on Tuesday, December 24. We can celebrate Advent by putting up an Advent Wreath and lighting candles each week. We are encouraged to look at the wreath and contemplate the meaning of Advent. The use of the wreath and candles during Advent are a longstanding Catholic tradition that was originally adopted by Christians in the Middle Ages as part of their spiritual preparation for Christmas. The wreath and candles are full of symbolism tied to the Christmas season. The wreath itself, which is made of various evergreens, signifies continuous life. The circle of the wreath, which has no beginning or end, symbolizes the eternity of God, the immortality of the soul, and the everlasting life we find in Christ. Even the individual evergreens that make up the wreath have their own meanings that can be adapted to our faith. The laurel signifies victory over persecution and suffering. The

pine, holly, and yew signify immortality and the cedar signifies strength and healing. The pine cones that decorate the wreath symbolize life and resurrection. The wreath as a whole is meant to remind us of both the immortality of our souls and God's promise of everlasting life to us through Christ.

The candles also have their own special significance. The four candles represent the four weeks of Advent. One candle is lit each Sunday. Three of the candles are purple because the color violet is a liturgical color that signifies a time of prayer, penance, and sacrifice. The first candle, symbolizes hope. It is sometimes called the "Prophecy Candle" in remembrance of the prophets, especially Isaiah, who foretold the birth of Christ. It represents the expectation felt in anticipation of the coming Messiah. The second candle which symbolizes faith is the Bethlehem Candle and is a reminder of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem. The third candle is pink because rose is a liturgical color for joy. It is the Shepherds' Candle, symbolizing joy. The third Sunday of Advent is Gaudete Sunday and is meant to remind us of the joy that the world experienced at the birth of Jesus, as well as the joy that the faithful have reached the midpoint of Advent. On the fourth week of Advent, we light the final purple candle to mark the final week of prayer and penance as we wait for the birth of our Savior. The fourth candle is the Angel's Candle, symbolizing peace. It reminds us of the message of the angels: "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men." Other variations of the themes include:

- Hope–Peace–Joy–Love
- Faithfulness–Hope–Joy–Love
- Prophets–Angels–Shepherds–Magi

Modern day adaptations include a white candle which is placed in the middle of the wreath and lit on Christmas Eve. This candle is called the "Christ Candle" and represents the life of Christ. The color white is for purity—because Christ is our sinless, pure Saviour.

Celebrating Advent is an excellent way to prepare your mind and heart for Christmas. For more ideas on celebrating Advent, check out [Mercy Home's Pinterest board](https://www.pinterest.ca/mercy_home/advent/?sender=164522330045808777&invite_code=c3e00ad94faf4d5ca22e996456f174fd). If you cannot get through with the link, try https://www.pinterest.ca/mercy_home/advent/?sender=164522330045808777&invite_code=c3e00ad94faf4d5ca22e996456f174fd.

Make use of the many resources our Diocesan Centre has to offer.

Have a wonderful November and December, a prayerful Advent, and a joyful Christmas.

Take care. God bless.