

ADVENT APPEAL

Several hundreds of years before Jesus was born, the Jewish prophets began to explain to the rest of the people that God was going to send someone special, a new leader, who would be like their great King David. This is what they said:

WORD OF THE WEEK

ISAIAH 9: 2, 6-7

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.
They live in a land of shadows, but now light is shining on them.

You have given them great joy, Lord:

You have made them happy.

They rejoice in what you have done,
As people rejoice when they harvest grain
Or when they divide captured wealth.

For you have broken the yoke that burdened them.

A child is born to us!

A son is given to us!

And he will be our ruler.

He will be called, "Wonderful Counsellor,"
"Mighty God", "Eternal Father",
"Prince of Peace".



PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

Jesus, help us to begin our Advent journey of faith,
and preparation.

Open our hearts to receive you and prepare a world
we would be proud for you to enter.

Centre our preparations for Christmas on growing
closer to you and helping others,
not ourselves and material things.

Be with all those people we aim to help this Advent.

Remind them of your love for them and
that they are not alone.

Help us to do all that we can to bring some
Christmas cheer and love into their lives.

We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



For many people, the four weeks of Advent are just a countdown of shopping days to Christmas. But for Christians, Advent is a special and holy time leading up to the birthday of Jesus. The word Advent means 'the coming'. When someone special is coming to visit, it is usual to get ready. During Advent, Christians get ready and prepare themselves for the coming of Jesus.

During the time of Advent and Christmas many people are moved to do something to help people less fortunate than themselves. Some people give to charity, buy Christmas cards from charities, or just share some of their time with people who need someone to talk to. This year, like every other year in school, we have our chance to do our bit to make a difference to the lives of others this Christmas. A time to focus on others, not ourselves, and a time to prepare our hearts and our world for the coming of Jesus, so that Jesus will find a welcome reception in our hearts and our world.



AN ADVENT POEM BY JOHN BELL

Light looked down and saw the darkness.
"I will go there", said light.
Peace looked down and saw war.
"I will do there", said peace.
Love looked down and saw hatred.
"I will go there", said love.
So he, The Lord of Light,
The Prince of Peace,
The King of Love,
Came down and crept in beside us.

POPE FRANCIS TO YOUNG PEOPLE

Yesterday was youth Sunday, and here is what Pope Francis said to you young people yesterday.

"Today too, God is saying to each one of you: "Arise!" I fervently hope that this message may help us prepare for a new time and a new page in the history of humanity. Yet we cannot begin anew without you, dear young people. If our world is to arise, it needs your strength, your enthusiasm, your passion."



SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT?

During Advent we prepare for the coming of the Lord. If we prepare our hearts and minds for Jesus' birth we will appreciate Christmas time all the more. Advent is a time of preparation. Next week we begin this special journey and we want to be ready so that Jesus will find a welcome reception in our hearts and our world. Take a moment to think about or discuss with the person next to you the following questions.

What can we do to prepare our hearts for Jesus' coming?

What type of person would Jesus want to meet when he comes into the world?

How can you be that person?

What can we do to prepare our world for Jesus' coming?

What would you like the world to look like if you knew Jesus was on his way?

What could you do to make this happen?

