

Faith Formation Connection

Welcome back everyone! We thank the parents who have entrusted their children to us. We understand that YOU are the first teachers of your children and it's our job to provide support to you in any way we can. One of those ways is to offer faith formation classes. This year the majority of our classes are online and have been very well received. We are also happy to be able to hold small, in-person classes for both our religious education program students as well as our R.C.I.A. students. It's not too late to register for on-line classes—just give our office a call or contact Midge Cassarini (mcassarini@srhap.org) or Alice Bolton (abolton@srhap.org).

Deacon Bill Palmisano, D.R.E.



WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

The Advent wreath is one of the most popular symbols used during the season of Advent. Traditionally, Advent wreaths are constructed of a circle of evergreen branches set around four candles, representing the four weeks of Advent. The evergreen circle symbolizes the eternal life of God. The 3 purple candles symbolize the prayer, penance and preparatory sacrifices and good works undertaken at the time. A purple candle is lit on the first Sunday of Advent, with another one lit on each succeeding Sunday. The joyfully colored pink candle is lit on the third Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday). Gaudete Sunday is the Sunday of rejoicing, because the faithful have arrived at the midpoint of Advent, when their preparation is now half over and they are close to Christmas. The progressive lighting of the candles symbolizes the expectation and hope surrounding our Lord's first coming into the world and the anticipation of his second coming to judge the living and the dead.

Advent Prayer

Heavenly Father, your son, Jesus, is your greatest gift to us, a great sign of your love. Guide us as we strive to walk in that love together as a family this Advent. As we prepare our hearts for Christmas, bring us the grace and strength we need every day. Help us to always trust in you. Come, Lord Jesus, lead all people closer to you. Come and dispel the darkness of our world with the light of your love. Amen.

FAMILY ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES

- Make an Advent Wreath. Light a candle and pray an advent prayer each day.
- Put out a Nativity set.
- Visit the Diocese of Trenton Faith at Home website <https://dioceseoftrenton.org/Faith-At-Home>

Upcoming Events/Deadlines

- 11/28: Parish Christmas Tree Lighting at 5:30 pm
- 11/29: First Sunday of Advent
- 12/1: **8th Grade Confirmation** Registration Form Due
- 12/6: Second Sunday of Advent
- 12/8: Feast of the Immaculate Conception
- 12/13: Third Sunday of Advent
- 12/20: Fourth Sunday of Advent
- 12/25: Christmas Day
- 1/1: Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
- 1/15: **8th Grade Confirmation** Saint Report Due
- 1/15: **Confirmation Sponsor Eligibility Letter** Due

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Holy Days of Obligation

December 8—Feast of the Immaculate Conception

This is the day we celebrate the Blessed Mother who was born without Original Sin and never knew sin.

January 1-The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

On this holy feast day, we take a moment as we start our new year to honor our Blessed Mother, who in her “yes” to God brought our savior into the world to redeem us.



Advent Quiz

(Answer key at bottom of page)

1. What does the word Advent (from the Latin *adventus*) mean?
 Before Christmas Arrival or coming To go on an adventure A website for online Christmas coupons
2. Like the 40 days of Lent, Advent is a fixed number of days before Christmas.
 True False
3. What does the candy cane symbolize?
 Shape of “J” for Jesus Represents a shepherd’s crook White represents purity
 Red represents His blood and suffering All of the above
4. Why are the Advent candles arranged in the shape of a circle?
 It’s the easiest way to see all four candles Circles symbolize eternity It takes up the least space
5. On the third Sunday in Advent, we light a pink (or rose) candle in the Advent wreath. Why?
 Pink (or rose) is a color of joy Pink signifies Mary The rosebud is a sign of new birth
 It represents the positive outlook we have in Christ The rose color symbolizes Jesus’ childhood
6. Do you know how the Advent calendar began?
 Chalk lines were drawn on the door to mark the days A candle was lit each of the 24 days in December
 Families hung pictures on the wall, one for each day A mother fixed candies on a calendar for her son
 All of the above
7. What is the meaning of the Hebrew word “Emmanuel”?
 Mighty king Christ child God is with us

Answer Key: 1. Arrival/coming; 2. False; 3. All of the above; 4. Circles symbolize eternity; 5. Pink (or rose) is a color of joy; 6. All of the above; 7. God is with us