

Blessings and Family Table Prayer for the Home for Advent & Christmas 2010

A Blessing of the Advent Wreath in the Home:

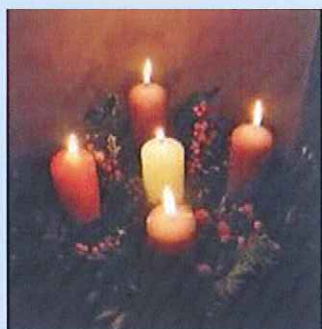
This blessing might be used when the Advent Wreath is lit on each of the four Sundays of Advent:

All make the Sign of the Cross

A member of the family recites the following blessing while another lights the first candle on the Advent Wreath:

Lord God,
Let your blessing come upon us as we light
the candle(s)
of this wreath.
May the wreath and its light be a sign of
Christ's promise
to bring us salvation.
May he come quickly and not delay.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen



Advent, from the Latin word *adventus*, meaning "coming", is a season of the Christian Church, the period of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus, the period immediately before Christmas.

A Blessing of the Christmas Tree in the Home:

This blessing can be prayed on the day that the family puts up the Christmas tree. Once the lights are ready to be switched on, the prayer can begin.

All make the Sign of the Cross

A member of the family turns the lights of the tree on and the blessing is then recited:

Lord our God,
We praise you for the light of creation:
The sun, the moon, and the stars of the night.
We praise you for the light of Israel:
The Law, the prophets, and the wisdom of the Scriptures.
We praise you for Jesus Christ, your Son:
he is Emmanuel, God-with-us, the Prince of Peace,
Who fills us with the wonder of your love.



Lord God,
Let your blessing come upon us as we illumine this tree.
May the light and cheer it gives us be a sign of the joy that fills our hearts.
May all who delight in this tree come to the knowledge and joy of salvation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen

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A Blessing of the Crib in the Home:

This blessing can be prayed when the crib is being put in place in the home. When the final figures are ready to be put into the crib, the family might gather around it and recite the following blessing:

All make the sign of the cross

God of every national and people,
from the very beginning of creation you have
made manifest your love:

When our need for a Saviour was great you
sent your Son to be born of the Virgin Mary.
To our lives he brings joy and peace,
justice, mercy, and love.

Lord,
Bless all who look upon this manger,
May it remind us of the humble birth of
Jesus, and raise up our thoughts to him,
Who is God-with-us and Saviour of all, and
who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Amen



Family Table Prayer for Christmas Day:

Loving God,
on this Christmas day we give thanks that
Jesus, your Son, has come into our world
bringing us gifts of peace and joy.

Bless us as we sit down together at this table
for our Christmas meal.

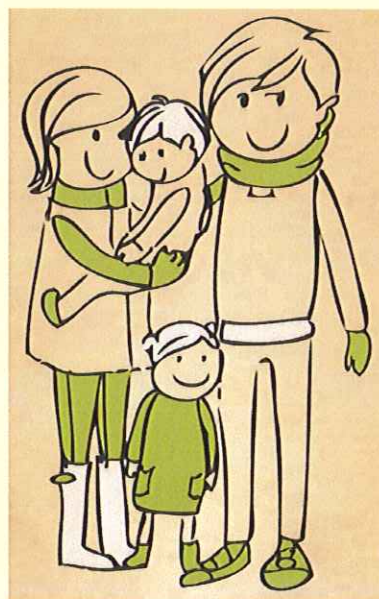
Bless the food we share and help us to
remember those who are hungry.

Be with our neighbours and our friends,
those who are lonely, sick or away from
home.

We pray that our departed loved ones
may now sit at your table in heaven.

May the joy of this feast give us strength
and light, now and in the days ahead.
We ask this prayer through Christ, Our Lord,

Amen



- Produced by the Council for Marriage and Family of the Irish Episcopal Conference.
- Blessings taken from the *Catholic Book of Blessings*.