

### Prayer Areas

Prayer focus cloths should be **green** which is the colour for the Liturgical season of Ordinary Time until the season of Advent begins on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December when they are changed to **purple**.

### November - the month of the Holy Souls.

The children can pray the Eternal Rest for family and friends who have died and for those who have no one to pray for them. At this time of year prayers can also be said for those who are bereaved. A popular method for remembering those who have died is in the form of a book or a basket in which to place the names of those who have died on shaped paper, e.g. crosses, flowers etc. These can be placed upon the prayer area and offered up during prayer. Alternatively, names can be written on brightly coloured strips of paper and hung from strings.

**Advent** is the first season in the Liturgical Year. It starts on the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day (25 December). An Advent Wreath can be part of the prayer focus with the appropriate number of candles being lit during prayer time. During the 1<sup>st</sup> two weeks, the Scripture readings focus on the Christian belief that Christ will come again and how we need to be ready for that. Words and phrases like 'Awake' and 'Be Ready' can be placed within the prayer area. The 2<sup>nd</sup> two weeks focus on Advent as a time during which we get ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus. As a season of preparation, it is also a time when we reflect upon how we live our lives and we seek forgiveness through the Sacrament of Reconciliation which enables us to start afresh. An appropriate act of contrition or Examen could be placed within the prayer focus.

[Cycle of Prayer | Advent-Christmas \(liturgyoffice.org.uk\)](https://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Cycle-of-Prayer-Advent-Christmas)

Prayer areas could include the figure of Mary to show her in contemplation about the forthcoming birth of her son.

Gradually build up the Nativity scene but the figure of baby Jesus should only be included on the last day of term. You may also include images or items which relate to your Advent fundraising.

### Bambinelli Sunday 17 December

*"And the word became flesh and dwelt among us"*  
John 1:14

The tradition follows that the third Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday) is Bambinelli Sunday when all the children bring their Bambinelli's (Baby Jesus figures) from their Nativity scenes to St. Peter's square to be blessed by the Pope.

Pope Francis said of Bambinelli Sunday 'when you gather in your homes in prayer before the manger, looking at the Child Jesus, you will feel amazement at the great mystery of God made man; and the Holy Spirit will give your heart the humility, tenderness and goodness of Jesus. This is the true Christmas! May this be so for you and for your families.' Why not make a Bambinelli in class for children to take home!



### November

#### Eternal Rest

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,  
and let perpetual light shine upon them.  
May they rest in peace. Amen.

#### A Prayer for Advent

#### A Prayer for Lighting the Advent Wreath

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, king of the universe.  
You sent your Son to be the Light of the world  
and to spread his light of love to all.  
As we light the candles of this wreath  
may its growing brightness remind us of  
the approaching nearness of your Son  
so that the day of His coming may find us prepared  
and filled with joy.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen

<https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/prayer/childrens-prayers/seasonal-prayers/advent-prayer-for-children/>

### Advent traditions from around the world

In class, use opportunities to explore how different cultures around the world prepare for Christmas during Advent. You could use <https://www.whychristmas.com/cultures/>

A traditional celebration in Poland is to decorate booths called Jaselki in villages and city squares. Special efforts are made by families and businesses to make their booth the favourite by depicting different scenes from the Christmas story. The booths are on display from early December through to New Year's Day.

Small gifts, sweets and Christmas Cards are distributed from the booths to passers-by, and normally carolling troops move from booth to booth on Christmas Eve, after which villagers makes their way to the Church to celebrate the Christmas Vigil Mass.

### Pope's Prayer Intentions

#### November

For the Pope

We pray for the Holy Father; as he fulfils his mission, may he continue to accompany the flock entrusted to him, with the help of the Holy Spirit.

#### December

For persons with disabilities

We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.

### Dates for the Diary\*

#### November 2023

**The Pope's Prayer Intention for November:** For the Pope  
**Month of the Holy Souls**

Wed 1 Solemnity of All Saints – Holyday of Obligation  
Thurs 2 The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls Day)

Wed 8 Memorial of Blessed George Napier  
Thurs 9 Feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica

Fri 10 Memorial of St. Leo the Great

Fri 11 Memorial of St. Martin of Tours

Sunday 12 Remembrance Sunday

Wed 15 Memorial of St. Albert the Great

Thurs 16 Memorial of St. Edmund of Abingdon

Memorial of St. Margaret of Scotland

Fri 17 Memorial of St. Hilda

Tue 21 Memorial of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Wed 22 Memorial St. Cecilia

Wed 23 Memorial of St. Clement

Memorial of St. Columban

Fri 24 Memorial of St. Andrew Dung-Lac

Sun 26 Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe (World Youth Sunday)

Thurs 30 Feast of St Andrew, Apostle

#### December 2023

**The Pope's Prayer Intention for December:** For persons with disabilities

Fri 1 Feast of St. Edmund Campion

#### Season of Advent

Mon 4 Memorial of St. John Damascene

Wed 6 Memorial of St. Nicholas

Thurs 7 Memorial of St. Ambrose

Fri 8 Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (patroness of the Archdiocese of Birmingham)

Mon 12 Memorial of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Tue 13 Memorial of St. Lucy

Wed 14 Memorial of St. John of the Cross

Sun 17 Gaudete Sunday (Bambinelli Sunday)

*\*For a complete list of dates, readings and colours please refer to the Archdiocese of Birmingham Ordo 2023-2024.*

*Further prayer resources can be found on <https://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/>*

### Faith In Action

#### Missio

Mission Together have created new liturgical prayers for each week of the season with relevant Sunday scriptures (Year A), reflections and activities, and accompanying slides containing seasonal religious art and embedded links to carols. <https://missiontogether.org.uk/calendar/advent-resources/>

#### Aid to the Church in Need (ACN)

In November, ACN prepared a report for Parliament on religious persecution. #RedWednesday! *'This is a day (or week) to pray for people who are not allowed religious freedom and you can read their stories on the website. As a school you can use the free #RW resources for assemblies, activities and prayers – we can even send you red glasses for your children if you like! Families and children all over the world who are suffering violence for being Christian'.* **Wednesday 22 November: RedWednesday Livestream**

**Assemblies-** hosted by Mark10 Mission & St. Thomas Aquinas, B'ham. To attend please email [community.outreach@acnuk.org](mailto:community.outreach@acnuk.org)

[Aid to the Church in Need | Red Wednesday Primary School Resources \(acnuk.org\);](#) [Aid to the Church in Need | Red Wednesday Secondary School Resources \(acnuk.org\)](#)