

CONFIRMATION PREP ADVENT LESSON PLAN

This lesson plan has two main components. We have a lesson around the liturgical year followed by an in-depth lesson about Advent.

It is expected that the explanation of the liturgical year will last about 30 minutes and the lesson about Advent will last the rest of the class period. Please add to this your own experiences and/or traditions. Additionally, you can discuss family traditions of the Confirmation students and their families.

1. Discuss the liturgical year which begins with Advent. Explain that the scripture readings are divided into three different years, A, B, and C. Nearly the whole of scripture, especially the new testament, is covered each three-year period, during Mass. Concentrate on the beginning and end of each season, the color of each season, and the reason for the season.

Season	Color	Length	Start	End	Brief Explanation
Advent	Violet	Four Weeks	First Sunday of Advent	Forth Sunday of Advent	Preparation for the coming of Jesus, both as an infant at Christmastime, and also when He comes a second time.
Christmas	White	Twelve Days	Christmas Day	Epiphany	Celebration of the Birth of Christ. The season ends with the visit of the Three Wise Men at the Epiphany.
Ordinary Time	Green	Four to Nine Weeks	First Sunday after Epiphany	Sunday before Ash Wednesday	Celebration of the life and teachings of Christ.
Lent	Violet	Forty-Four Days	Ash Wednesday	Holy Thursday	Preparation for Easter. A season of fasting, almsgiving, and prayer. Commemorates the forty days that Jesus spent in the desert in preparation for his public ministry. The 44 days of Lent less the 6 Sundays of Lent plus Holy Thursday and Good Friday represents the forty days of fasting in preparation of Easter.
Easter Triduum	Red	Three Days	Holy Thursday	Easter Sunday	Celebration of the Passion of the Lord.
Easter	White	Fifty Days	Easter Sunday	Pentecost	Celebration of the Resurrection of Christ and his teachings to the Apostles, his Ascension into Heaven, and the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost (the birthday of the Catholic Church)
Ordinary Time	Green	Total of 33 or 34 weeks including the portion of ordinary time before Lent.	Monday after Pentecost	Saturday before First Sunday of Advent	Celebration of the life and teachings of Christ.

2. Quiz the students about the Holy Days of Obligation, concentrating on how they fall during the liturgical calendar.

Holy Days of Obligation	Date	Brief Explanation
Immaculate Conception	December 8th	Celebration of the Immaculate Conception of Mary (Mary being conceived without sin in her mother's (St. Ann) womb).
Christmas	December 25th	Celebration of the Birth of Christ
Solemnity of Mary	January 1st	Celebration of the Holiness of Mary
Ascension Thursday	Forty Days after Easter	Most diocese in the United States, including Atlanta, have moved the celebration of the feast of the Ascension of Jesus to Sunday.
Assumption of Mary	August 15th	Mary is Assumed (Body and Soul) into Heaven.
All Saints Day	November 1st	Celebration of all of the Saints of the Church

3. Explain how all of the major celebrations of Lent and Easter are connected to the date of Easter and that the date of Easter is tied to the first Sunday after the first full moon of Spring. This is why the dates of Lent and Easter can vary by up to 35 days, falling as early as March 22nd and as late as April 25th.

Events of Lent and Easter	Timing
Ash Wednesday	47 Days before Easter
Palm Sunday	One Week before Easter Sunday
Holy Thursday	Third Day before Easter Sunday
Good Friday	Second Day before Easter Sunday
Holy Saturday	Day before Easter Sunday
Easter Sunday	First Sunday after the First Full Moon in Spring
Ascension Thursday	Forty Days after Easter
Pentecost	Fifty Days after Sunday

If you have any questions about the portion of the lesson related to the liturgical year, please give me a call or send me an e-mail:

Walter J. Morawa (770) 597-6029, wjmorawa@bellsouth.net



Advent and the Liturgical Season

Advent is the beginning of our New Liturgical year. So, on the 1st Sunday of Advent we can say “Happy New Year!” During Advent we are preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus, Our Savior “coming” into the world and we continue to make preparations for Jesus’ 2nd coming at the end of this world.

This is my favorite time of the whole year! While the whole world is “wrapped up” in wrapping presents, the people of faith focus on being wrapped up in preparing our hearts for receiving New Life, the precious life of Christ Jesus as a tiny human baby. He entered this world as we did.

Another beautiful moment to contemplate during Advent is the “Yes” of Mary and what happened in her life after she said “Yes.” Mary prepared herself to carry, deliver, and welcome the Son of God into our crazy, beautiful, and sometimes not so beautiful world we as humans live in. Through the example of Mary we must envision how we can begin to prepare our hearts for welcoming the Son of God on Christmas Day.

When does Advent begin? Advent begins four Sundays before Christmas Day. The first day of Advent is not necessarily December 1st. It can be as short as 23days or as long as 29days since the 4th Sunday of Advent could fall the day before Christmas, like in 2017, or a whole week before Christmas. There must be at least 4 Sundays in Advent . There may not be 4 full weeks.

There are many great Advent activities you can look up. Here we will focus on one.

The Advent Wreath

1. Show It

One of the tools we have in our Catholic/ Christian church is the Advent Wreath. Bring in an Advent wreath you may have at home to show your students (or buy/borrow one from someone). As you show them the wreath have them gather around so you can explain all the symbolism hidden in it. **(Please see attached to make bookmarks and pass out to your students with the symbolisms I have found.)** You may find others you want to add.) The Advent Wreath is a great tool because it helps us refocus at least once a week during Advent, as sometimes every day may be difficult, but definitely encouraged!! This is a good place to start for many families.

2. Make It

Last year I demonstrated how to make a very simple inexpensive Advent wreath in class. You could buy materials yourself from the Dollar Store or Walmart or have the students sign-up to bring materials to share as a class so each student can make one. Also, you can simply demonstrate how the students can make one at home with their families for very little money. The point here is to encourage families to celebrate Advent even in the simplest way. After all that's how Jesus did it! ☺ **(Please see attached for materials, picture, and instructions for the one I made.** You can, of course, be creative and look up another way to make an advent wreath.

3. Review It

While explaining the symbolism, I brought in a “fancy” Advent wreath. At the end of class I gave it away to one of the students. (I prayed that God would give it to the family that needed it the most.) You can play a trivia /review game to see who can win this “fancy” Advent wreath. Or simply have everyone put their name in a bowl at the beginning of class and then draw a name at the end of class.**(This is optional!)**

4. Use It

After you have demonstrated how to make an Advent wreath, practice using it! If you haven't before, explain that we light one candle each Sunday of Advent and that this is something we do at Mass as well.

Move all the chairs. Have everyone sit on the floor. Place your Advent wreath in the middle and light at least one candle (I used battery operated candles. I thought Elizabeth would appreciate that more. ☺) Then lead your class in an Advent meditation. This will give them a **spiritual example** to follow as they prepare their hearts for Jesus' coming and to share with their families. You can simply read the gospel of Luke on the Annunciation and discuss with them or find another Advent meditation resource you like. **(Loyola Press.com has great weekly reflections and resources on line. FORMED.org has Advent videos for teens).** This is the HEART of it all! Encourage them to mention their intentions during this time and keep them in mind throughout Advent!

As always, you are in my prayers! Please let me know if you have any questions or suggestions.

God bless you for all you do in spreading His kingdom,

Priscilla Balmes (678)698-0499, pbalmes622@gmail.com