

Faith-Filled HOLIDAYS

Advent

WEEK 4 - LOVE

BEST USE

As a way to anticipate the celebration of the birth of Jesus and recapture the tradition of Advent in your home this Christmas season

SPIRITUAL VALUE

The word Advent comes from the Latin word that means *coming* or *arrival*. For centuries the Church has celebrated the four-week Advent season by lighting candles in a wreath and reflecting on the coming of Jesus as told in Scripture. The circle of the wreath represents God's never-ending love for us, the evergreens represent Christ's gift of eternal life and the candles announce Jesus as the Light of the World.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

You can find an Advent wreath and candles in the arts and crafts or holiday section of many stores. You will need some kind of simple wreath and five candles. Arrange them in the center of your table throughout the Christmas season. Use this *Advent* activity to guide your family through a brief moment of reflection during a meal or bedtime snack each weekend before Christmas and on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

LIGHT THE CANDLES

Before eating, light the first three candles and remind everyone that these are the candles of Hope, Peace and Joy. Then light the fourth candle and explain it is the candle of Peace. Traditionally, the first two candles lit are purple, the third is pink, and the fourth is purple, but any colors will work. Consider taking turns lighting and reading the verse each week.

READ

John 3:16 – *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

EXPLAIN

The fourth Week of Advent is the week of Love. This verse tells us that Jesus came because God loves us so much that he doesn't want any of us to miss out on spending eternity (forever) with him. All we have to do is *believe* that Jesus is the Son of God who came to save us from sin. God's love for us is one of the main themes the Apostle John wrote about in the Bible. He tells us in another verse that the greatest love anyone can have is to give their life for others (**John 15:13**). He also tells us we are to love *one another* because love comes from God (**1 John 4:7**).

DISCUSS

- Who are the people you love the most?
- What would you be willing to give up for those you love? (favorite toys, choosing the TV show, time for hobbies, money, career aspirations, etc.)
- How much do you think God had to love us in order to give his Son for us?

PRAY

Father in heaven, thank you for the gift of your Son, Jesus, who came because you love us so much and want to spend forever with us. Help us to believe that Jesus came to save us from sin and help us to show your love to one another. Amen.