



Worship Office

Archdiocese of Newark



Liturgy Note

Concerning an Advent Wreath

Updated October 6, 2023

An Advent wreath may be placed in the church and lighted during liturgies of the season. The lighting of the wreath takes place in a simple way during the liturgy, or it may even be done before Mass begins.

From *Book of Blessings*, Introduction of Chapter 47, "Order for the Blessing of an Advent Wreath"

1509. The use of the Advent Wreath is a traditional practice which has found its place in the Church as well as in the home. The blessing of an Advent Wreath takes place on the First Sunday of Advent or on the evening before the First Sunday of Advent. The blessing may be celebrated during Mass, a celebration of the word of God, or Evening Prayer.

1510. Customarily the Advent Wreath is constructed of a circle of ever-green branches into which are inserted four candles. According to tradition, three of the candles are violet and the fourth is rose. However, four violet or white candles may also be used.

1511. The candles represent the four weeks of Advent and the number of candles lighted each week corresponds to the number of the current week of Advent. The rose candle is lighted on the Third Sunday of Advent, also known as Gaudete Sunday.

1512. If the Advent Wreath is to be used in church, it should be of sufficient size to be visible to the congregation. It may be suspended from the ceiling or placed on a stand. If it is placed in the presbyterium, it should not interfere with the celebration of the liturgy, nor should it obscure the altar, lectern, or chair.

1513. When the Advent Wreath is used in church, on the Second and succeeding Sundays of Advent the candles are lighted either before Mass begins or immediately before the opening prayer; no additional rites or prayers are used.

1514. When the blessing of the Advent Wreath is celebrated in the home, it is appropriate that it be blessed by a parent or another member of the family; the shorter rite may appropriately be used for this purpose.

1515. When the Advent Wreath is used in the home, the opening prayer of the Sunday Mass is recited when the candles are lighted. The lighting of the candles may be preceded or followed by an Advent hymn and a Scripture reading. The lighting of the Advent Wreath may fittingly be included as a part of the evening meal.

From *Built of Living Stones*

128. Objects such as the **Advent wreath**, the Christmas crib, and other traditional seasonal appointments proportioned to the size of the space and to the other furnishings can enhance the prayer and understanding of the parish community.