

THE  
ADVENT  
WREATH

How to Make and Use One



# THE ADVENT WREATH

The Christians preparing for their feast of light and life, the Nativity of the Savior, found the wheel or wreath an appropriate means. Adding one light for each of the four Sundays in Advent they think about the darkness without God after the Fall, the growing hope for salvation, enkindled in paradise, nourished through the ages by the prophets up to John, the Precursor, until the Morning Star who announces the coming of the Sun came forth: the Virgin who bore a Son.

The wreath without beginning and end stands for eternity; the greens for life and growth; the four candles, preferably of beeswax and blessed and set aside since Candlemas, represent the ages “sitting in darkness and the shadow of death,” each candle adding more light until on Christmas the light from the wreath sets off, as it were, the blaze of light on the “tree of life”, the Christmas tree, for the time is fulfilled.

## How to Make It

Given the materials, the making of an Advent wreath is very simple. You will need four or five good evergreen branches. Also needed will be four candles (all white, or three purple and one pink), two to three yards of two-inch purple ribbon, a spool of black or green thread or fine wire or green twist ties, and a hoop with four candle holders, or a manufactured Advent wreath. Some layers of reed or willow switches, shaped and tied will also serve. The greens--any kind of evergreen-- cut in hand-size pieces are wound with thin wire or thread until the desired thickness is reached. The wreath is then hung by four purple ribbons fastened with simple knots in the spaces between the candles. If there is not a suitable place for hanging the wreath, it may be hung from a stand which can be constructed from a discarded floor lamp or coat rack. A more simple procedure is to set the wreath on a buffet or table, in which case the evergreens may be loosely tied or arranged in a circle around the four candleholders. Use your imagination to fit your circumstances.

## The Blessing of the Wreath

The Blessing of the wreath should take place on Saturday evening before the first Sunday of Advent. Before the evening meal the father or, in his absence, the head of the household, performs the blessing in the presence of the entire family. The following prayers are suggested:

Father: Our help is in the Name of the Lord.

All: Who hath made Heaven and Earth.

Father: Let us pray. O God, by Whose word all things are sanctified, pour forth Thy blessing upon this wreath, and grant that we who use it may prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ and may receive from Thee abundant graces. Through Christ Our Lord. All: Amen.

•*He then sprinkles the wreath with holy water.*

*The prayer follows which is said throughout the first week before the evening meal.*

### The First Week

O Lord, stir up Thy power, we beg Thee, and come, that by Thy protection we may deserve to be rescued from the threatening dangers of our sins and be saved by Thy deliverance. Through Christ Our Lord. *One candle is then lighted by the youngest child\* (and may be left burning during the evening meal, if it is to be safely attended).*



### The Second Week

O Lord, stir up our hearts that we may prepare the ways of Thine only begotten Son, that through His coming we may be made worthy to serve Thee with purified minds. Through Christ Our Lord. *The oldest child\* lights two candles during this week.*



### The Third Week\*\*

O Lord, we beseech Thee, incline Thine ear to our prayers and enlighten the darkness of our minds by the grace of Thy visitation. Through Christ Our Lord. *Three candles are lighted by the mother\* during this week (two purples and one pink).*



### The Fourth Week\*\*

O Lord, we beseech Thee, stir up Thy power and come; and with great might deliver us, that with the help of Thy grace, Thy merciful forgiveness may hasten what our sins impede. Through Christ Our Lord. *All four candles are lighted by the father\* during this week.*



*\*or by whoever the parents delegate. \*\*On December 17-23, the appropriate "O" Antiphon may be added (See next page). Some families light the candles before the prayer, and finish by singing one, two, three, then four verses of "O Come O Come Emmanuel" or the hymn "Rorate Coeli" during the successive weeks. See page 5.*

# THE GREATER ADVENT ANTIPHONS OR “GREAT O’S”.

*Ecclus. 24:5; Wis. 8:1* DECEMBER 17

**O SAPIENTIA**, \* *quæ ex ore Altissimi prodiisti, attingens a fine usque ad finem, fortiter suaviterque disponens omnia: veni ad docendum nos viam prudentiæ.*

**O WISDOM**, Which camest out of the mouth of the Most High, reaching from end to end and ordering all things mightily and sweetly: come and teach us the way of prudence.

*Ex. 3:2; 20:1* DECEMBER 18

**O ADONAI**, \* *et dux domus Israël, qui Moysi in igne flammæ rubi apparuisti, et ei in Sina legem dedisti: veni ad redimendum nos in brachio extento.*

**O ADONAI**, and Leader of the house of Israel, Who didst appear to Moses in the flame of the burning bush, and didst give unto him the law on Sinai: come and with an outstretched arm redeem us.

*Is. 11:10* DECEMBER 19

**O RADIX Jesse**, \* *qui stas in signum populorum, super quem continebunt reges os suum, quem gentes deprecabuntur: veni ad liberandum nos, jam noli tardare.*

**O ROOT of Jesse**, Which standest for an ensign of the people, before Whom kings shall keep silence, Whom the Gentiles shall beseech: come and deliver us, and tarry not.

*Is. 22:22; Apoc. 3:7; Lk. 1:79* DECEMBER 20

**O CLAVIS David**, \* *et sceptrum domus Israël, qui aperis, et nemo claudit, claudis, et nemo aperit: veni, et educ vinctum de domo carceris, sedentem in tenebris, et umbra mortis.*

**O KEY of David**, and Scepter of the house of Israel, that openest and no man shutteth, and shuttest and no man openeth: come and bring the prisoner forth from the prison-house, and him that sitteth in darkness and in the shadow of death.

*Ps. 106:10* DECEMBER 21

**O ORIENS**, \* *splendor lucis æternæ, et sol justitiæ: veni, et ilumina sedentes in tenebris, et umbra mortis.*

**O DAY-SPRING**, Brightness of light eternal, and Sun of Justice, come and enlighten them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.

*Agg. 2:8; Eph. 2:14,20* DECEMBER 22

**O REX Gentium**, *et desideratus earum, lapisque angularis, qui facis utraque unum: veni, et salva hominem, quem de limo formasti.*

**O KING of the Gentiles** and the desire thereof, Thou cornerstone that makest both one, come and deliver mankind, whom Thou didst form out of clay.

*Is. 7:14; 33:22* DECEMBER 23

**O EMMANUEL**, *Rex et legifer noster, exspectatio Gentium, et Salvator earum: veni ad salvandum nos, Domine Deus noster.*

**O EMMANUEL**, our King and Lawgiver, the desire of the nations and the Savior thereof, come to save us, O Lord our God.

## Rorate caeli desuper

1. **R**  Orá-te, caeli, dé-super, et núbes plú-ant jústum.

*The Choir repeats : Rorate.*



I. Ne irascá-ris, Dómine, ne ultra memíne-ris in-iqui-tá-



tis : ecce cívi-tas Sáncti fácta est de-sérta : Sí-on de-sérta



fácta est: Jerúsa-lem deso-lá-ta est: dómus sancti-ficati-ónis

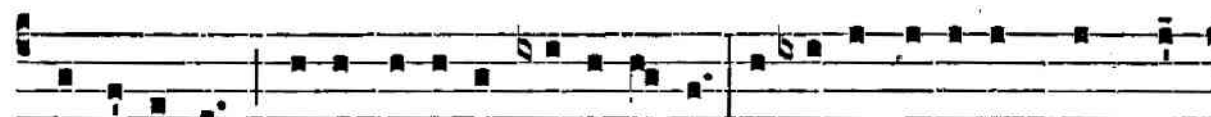


tú-ae et gló-ri-ae tú-ae, ubi lauda-vérunt te pátres nóstri.

*R.* Rorate.



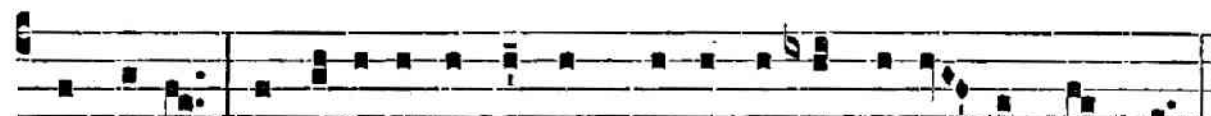
2. Peccávimus, et fácti súmamus tamquam immúndus nos, et



ce-cídimus quasi fó-li-um univérsi : et iniqui-tátes nóstrae



quasi véntus abstu-lé-runt nos : abscondísti fáci-em tú-am



a nóbis, et alli-sísti nos in mánu in-iqui-tá-tis nóstrae.

*R.* Rorate.





3. Víde, Dómine, afflicti- ónem pópu- li tú- i, et mítte



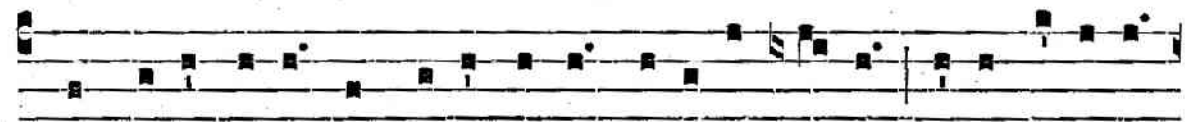
quem missú- rus es : emítte Agnum dominató- rem térrae,



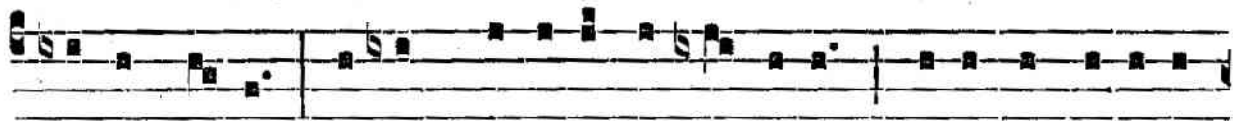
de Pétra de- sérti ad móntem fí- li- ae Sí- on : ut áuferat



ipse júgum capti- vi- tá- tis nóstrae. R̄. Rorate.



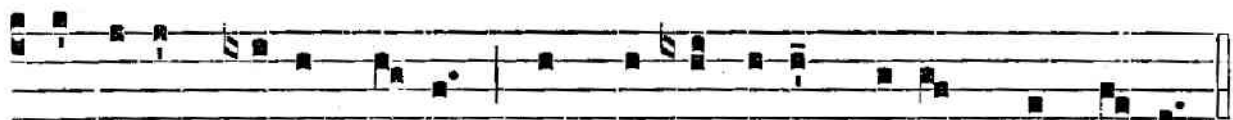
4. Conso- lámini, conso- lámi- ni, pópule mé- us : cito véni- et



sá- lus tú- a : qua- re moeróre consúme- ris, qui- a innovávit



te dó- lor? Salvá- bo te, nó- li timé- re, égo enim sum



Dóminus Dé- us tú- us, Sánctus Isra- el, Redémptor tú- us.

R̄. Rorate.

*A recording of this beautiful chant is included on the audio CD, "Christmas in St. Mary's", available from Immaculata Bookstore, PO Box 159, St. Marys, KS 66536 USA. Telephone 785-437-2409. They also supply Advent candles.*