

Straw for the Manger



MAKE YOUR OWN STRAW MANGER

Materials Needed:

- Box, wooden craft or shoe box
- Baby Jesus, peg doll or other representation
- Straw, yarn, or strips of fabric/paper

Additional Ideas:

You can create nativity animals with glue and popsicle sticks
You can decorate or paint the outside of your box/manger
You can add a felt or fabric blanket to swaddle the doll Jesus
You can place Jesus in the manger on Christmas singing *O, Come All Ye Faithful* or *Silent Night*

PREPARING THE MANGER

We begin Advent with an empty manger, much like our own hearts, ready to receive Jesus. In order to make a soft bed for the baby Jesus who will come on Christmas day, our families **make bedding from pieces of straw or yarn that represent the prayers, good works, devotions, and sacrifices performed during the season of Advent.** At the end of the day, you can put in a piece of straw for each good act and watch as the manger becomes soft with the piling up of your holy works, ready for Jesus.

WE AWAIT HIS COMING

During Advent, we think of how Christ came as a baby to the Holy Family that first Christmas at Bethlehem; how He comes into our lives in the present moment through the outpouring of His grace and the Sacraments; and we contemplate how Jesus will come again on the last day.

LET US PRAY:

The eternal Son of God having become man out of love for us, **chose to be born in a lowly stable, rather than in the greatest palace of kings.** Being rich, He became poor for our sake to show us how greatly He loves poverty and humility. But the presence of the King of kings made this lowly shelter to be the most honorable and noble of royal palaces. Herein He was pleased to be, adored by His virgin mother and father, by the poor shepherds, and by the wealthy wise men. As a man among men Christ came for all men, of all times, and all places; unless we say "there is no room," He will come into our home this Christmas night, and will make it a place of splendor, of love and of great joy.



O God, out of your love for us you sent your dearly beloved Son to become man. **You willed that he be born in a humble stable** in order to give us an example of humility. We pray you now to bless this crib, a representation of the scene of his birth; may it draw us closer to him. By imitating his humility may we become a worthy dwelling place for his rebirth, Jesus Christ, thy Son our Lord.

Prayer Source: *Twelve Days of Christmas*, The by Elsa Chaney, The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, MN, 1955 on catholicculture.org

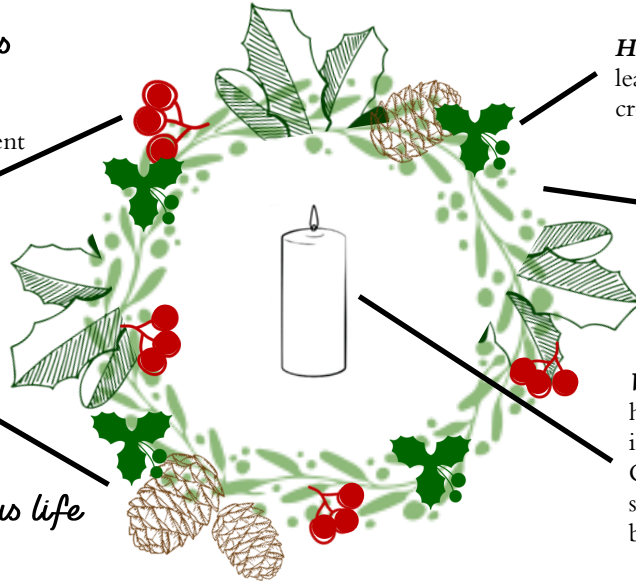
Advent Wreath

There are beautiful symbols of the wreath:

Berries—Red berries are reminiscent of great drops of blood and symbolize Christ's bloodshed and death to redeem mankind.

Pinecones—seeds, nuts, pinecones that decorate the wreath bring to mind life and resurrection.

Evergreens signify continuous life both Christ, ever alive, and our own soul's immortality.



Holly—The sharp leaves remind us of the crown of thorns.

Circle—The circle has no beginning or end and signifies the eternity of God, His everlasting love for us, and the unending life found in Christ.

White Candle—Some modern versions have a single white middle candle that is lit Christmas Eve that stands for Christ Himself. All the candles symbolize the light of Christ, growing brighter as Christmas draws near.



Laurel signifies victory over suffering and persecution.



Cedar signifies strength and healing.



Pine signifies immortality.

Let Us Pray:

All make the sign of the cross as the leader says:
Our help is in the name of the Lord.
Response (R/.) **Who made heaven and earth.**

Then the Scripture, Isaiah 9:1-2, 5-6 or Isaiah 63:16-17;19 or Isaiah 64:2-7 is read:
Reader: **The Word of the Lord.**
R/. **Thanks be to God.**

With hands joined, the leader says:
Lord our God, we praise you for your Son, Jesus Christ: he is Emmanuel, the hope of the peoples, he is the wisdom that teaches and guides us, he is the Savior of every nation. Lord God, let your blessing come upon us as we light the candles of this wreath. May the wreath and its light be a sign of Christ's promise to bring us salvation. May he come quickly and not delay. We ask this through Christ our Lord. R/. Amen.

The blessing may conclude with a verse from "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel": **O come, desire of nations, bind in one the hearts of humankind; bid ev'ry sad division cease and be thyself our Prince of peace. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**
—From [Catholic Household Blessings & Prayers](#)

First Week

Color: Purple

Name: **Prophet's Candle**

Reminds us of: Hope

Represents: The Patriarchs

The violet color of the 3 candles symbolizes penance, prayer and sacrifice, while also reminding us of Christ's kingship (royalty).

Second Week

Color: Purple

Name: **Bethlehem Candle**

Reminds us of: Love or Faith

Represents: Prophets

We think of Mary & Joseph traveling to Bethlehem.

Third Week

"Gaudete"

Color: Rose

Name: **Shepherd's Candle**

Reminds us of: Joy

Represents: John the Baptist

We rejoice and prepare as the end of Advent draws near and our waiting for Christ is almost over.

Fourth Week

Color: Purple

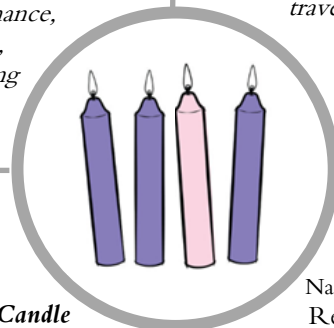
Name: **Angel's Candle**

Reminds us of: Peace

or Promise

Represents: Mary, the Mother of Jesus

The angels' message was peace on earth, good will towards men.



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Candles + Sundays of Advent

Centuries between the last prophet Malachi & Christ

$\times 1,000 = 4,000$ biblical years between Adam & Eve and the awaited Savior

At times red candles are used.

This can remind us of Christ's sacrifice of blood on the cross, as well as the "red apple" that was often used in medieval Christmas plays, recalling the fall of Adam in the garden and the need of a savior.



Blue bowl—At the base of the candles, there is sometimes a blue bowl, which reminds us of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, who bore Jesus in her womb and brought Him forth into our world on Christmas.

Advent 2020 at St. Luke's

VIRTUAL PARISH MISSION

Mondays 12:00pm

Live Streamed or On-demand Playback
(YouTube & Website)

A 4-part series of Advent-themed talks about 30-45 minutes, some with music, reflection, prayer, Q&A.

Week 1—11/30

Speaker: Father Paul Gary
Topic: St Joseph

Week 2—12/7

Speaker: Katy De'Ath
Topic: The Blessed Mother

Week 3—12/14

Speaker: Stewardship
led by Cynthia Leugers
Topic: Jesus

Week 4—12/21 (En Espanol)

Speaker: Hispanic Ministry
led by Deacon Raphael
Topic: The Nativity

PENANCE SERVICE

Jointly, at St John Neumann
December 17th 7:00pm



FEEDING FAMILIES

The Knights are collecting canned goods and gift cards to feed families in need. Visit stlukeknights.com for specific details. Drop off at Masses or during office hours by **December 20th**.

KoC MAGNET SALES

Purchase a "Keep Christ in Christmas" magnet to help support the great charitable work of the Knights. Look out for details or contact: Grandknight12832@gmail.com

GIVING TREE GIFTS

Parishioners can take a tag in person from the Giving Tree in the brick area (supporting newly relocated refugees), sign up for a "virtual tag" to purchase a gift on the signup genius (to support St Luke's parishioners in need), or you may choose to give an online donation to our Thomasboro Ministry. Return purchased gifts by **December 14th**. Details: www.stlukechurch.net/giving-tree

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

Virtual Novena **Dec 2nd—10th** 8:00pm on Zoom.

For link email Angela Childress
at childress10@hotmail.com

Mass: Friday **Dec 11th** 7:00pm (& streaming!)

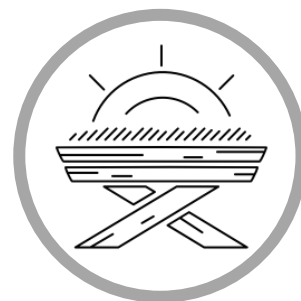
Outdoor shrine: 6:00-9:00 Friday, 3:00 Saturday



Activities to Celebrate the Season

STRAW FOR THE MANGER

A new tradition to bring into your homes this year! We are providing materials to make your own "Straw for the Manger" kits to keep in your homes (collect during office hours or Masses). In order to make a soft bed for the baby Jesus, families make bedding from pieces of straw that represent the Advent prayers, good works, and sacrifices.



NATIVITY SCENES VIDEO

Submit photos of your nativity scenes and Advent wreaths to share in a compiled parish video! Send via our Facebook page (messenger) or email Advent@stlukechurch.net. Show us your awesome Advent décor by **December 8th** so we can make the video to be shared on social media, website, and email.

