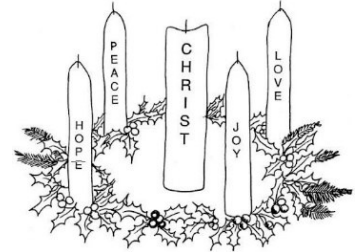


LITURGY BYTES

It is Almost Advent!

Can you believe it? It is almost time for Advent! This year the holy season of Advent happens during Thanksgiving weekend. We move from the glorious colors of fall, giving thanks and being grateful, to preparing for the awesome feast of Christ's birth at Christmas.



A few thoughts to ponder as we look towards this season of waiting in the midst of getting swept up into this distracted world of ours. Some traditions often help me to embrace a mindset of waiting – the Advent wreath and lighting of the candles each week, leaving an empty manger/cradle on my dining room table have helped in years past, and I also love some of the Advent hymns as well as the purple color adorning the sanctuary each week.

As we try to tune out the commercialization of Christmas, we still need to live within it for practical reasons such as purchasing gifts, sending cards, and getting our homes ready for that special day that lasts more than 24 hours. We somehow manage walking in both worlds with symbols and sounds keeping us on track!

Perhaps this season we take up one Advent tradition with new fervor. Look into its origin and meaning, and ask the Holy Spirit to refresh a “religious” imagination within you. Be reminded how integral you are as a member of the Body of Christ with eyes of gratitude for the birth of God's only Son, Christ Jesus, in Bethlehem! I pray we all see goodness—the goodness of the Lord this Advent season.

Have a safe, healthy, and blessed week! ~~ *Michele Hahn*