

All About the Atrium

A newsletter for parents of children in the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Atrium



The Season of Advent

The Word Advent means “coming.” It prepares to celebrate the coming of the baby Jesus in Bethlehem at the first Christmas. It also anticipates His second coming at the Parousia, when God will be all in all. And it reminds us that Jesus comes to us daily in His Word and in the Sacraments.

In the Atrium, we begin the season with an Advent Celebration, where we announce this time of waiting and preparing for the Feast of Christmas, by changing the liturgical color on the prayer table from **green** to **purple**.

In preparation for changing your home prayer table, you will want to gather your materials:



- a purple cloth,
- an Advent Wreath and four candles,
- a statue of Mary,
- an empty manger,
- an Advent prayer card,
- a stand for the card and
- a candle tray (containing matches and a snuffer)

As you come to your prayer table, you will want to direct your child to the color on the table, green for Ordinary Time. Now we will want to change the cloth on the table to reflect the color for this season of preparation. Invite the child to remove an item, one at a time, and place it on a nearby shelf or table. Once the table is clear, beginning with the purple, invite the child to dress the prayer table. The Season of **Advent** begins on Sunday, November 27, 2016.

Advent Prayer Cards

As a family, you may want to create a prayer card with the words of the Angel’s greeting to Mary, **Rejoice, full of grace** and **The Lord is with you** so that you can continue to ponder these words during Advent. The prayer cards can be placed on your family prayer table near the Advent Wreath.

You may also make prayer cards with the names of Jesus that the children will hear in the Atrium:

Wonderful Counselor or **Prince of Peace** as the children love to proclaim these names of Jesus.



The Advent Wreath

An Advent Wreath may be found on the prayer table in the Atrium. The wreath has a circular base and four candles, representing the four weeks of the Advent Season.

Many families have an Advent Wreath and light the corresponding candles at meal time or prayer time. Do you have a particular song that you like to sing when you light the candles on your wreath? Your children may enjoy “**Light One Candle**.” Listen to the song (*written by Natalie Sleeth and used with permission by Hinshaw Music, Inc.*), sung by CGS catechist Genevieve Priest at the link [HERE](#). Songs give the child a way of expressing emotions and spirituality. Singing is also a physical release for the child. It is a way for the child to practice language, new words, poetry, and other cultural information. This song, and many more, can be found in “Sing With Joy: Music of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd” available on our website. <http://www.cgsusa.org/products/sing-with-joy/>

Gifts Shared

A great gift for the child in your life is a set of the *Little Gospels* – the Scripture books used in the Atrium. The set of five books includes a rigid, clothbound slipcase with foil stamping and five hardcover books with foil stamping on the front and back cover. Each 32-page book is 4 3/4 x 6 1/2 and fits perfectly in the hands of a child. Included in the set of *Infancy Narratives*: The Annunciation of the Angel to Mary, The Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth, The Birth of Jesus and the Adoration of the Shepherds, The Presentation in the Temple, and The Adoration of the Magi.

Our publisher, Liturgy Training Publications (LTP), has offered us a special sale on these little treasures. We are so pleased to share this sale with you! <http://www.cgsusa.org/products/little-gospels-infancy-narratives-set/>.