

Hello «Name_First»

As we step into Advent I am writing to bring to your attention some resources to support your family in preparing with «Childs_Name_First» for the feast of the Nativity, the birth of the Christ-child into our lives.

Our New Year: We are beginning a new church year this weekend the 2nd/3rd December. We move into a new cycle of readings at our Masses, with our Gospel readings predominantly from Mark.

Finding Balance Over The Coming Weeks: Christmas is a time that touches us on many levels, emotional, financial and spiritual. It can be a challenge for many and it can be difficult to find a balance. I want to offer you suggestions on ways to create time for yourself this Advent. Some of these may help:

- If possible set aside a space in your home where you can go to have some quiet time.
- Take a 10 minute walk at lunch time.
- Play some of your favourite music during your daily commute.
- Take a moment when your phone rings, before you answer it, to become present to the person that you are going to speak with.
- Pause for a moment to listen to the sounds around you or to look at the scenery.
- Light a candle in your home, at mealtime perhaps, with the intention of being attentive to the preparation for Christmas.

Online Resources: The Ignatian society offer a self-paced retreat for Advent using their [Sacred Space](#) and [Pray as You Go](#) websites. You can use it on-line or download it as a podcast. I have used Pray as You Go for many years and find it an excellent means of bringing me into prayer.

This year they have produced a promotional video, for their Advent series. [Watch the video >>>](#)



Advent Candles: We setup an Advent wreath in each of our churches. In it we have five candles, 3 purple, 1 pink and one white. We light a different candle on each weekend, Purple, Purple, Pink, Purple and then white on Christmas Eve night.

Many setup these candles in their homes. Brady's hardware in Greystones have sets for sale as do the Carmelite sisters in Delgany. There is a ceremony at 3.30pm in the Monastery in Delgany tomorrow, 2nd December, with the

Maynooth College Choir for the blessing of their advent wreath. You can bring candles to it also. (Note it is not necessary to have the candles blessed)

If there is any way I can be of help to you feel free to get in touch.

Kindest regards

Paul