

FAITH IN 5

Advent: Week 1

Ages 3-8

1. We have entered into a new Church Season! We are no longer in Ordinary time. **What season are we in now?** We are in the season of Advent! Read Matthew 24:37-44 together. Jesus tells us to "stay awake!" **What does He mean by this?** Jesus tells us that we will not know the day when He returns. He tells the story of Noah and the flood- the people were not living by God's laws and were swept away by the flood. In Advent, we are in a season of waiting, but this reading reminds us that we must always be ready for Christ, just like in Advent!
2. During Advent, we are in a season of waiting and preparation. Advent means arrival! **Who are we preparing for?** We are preparing for Jesus to be born! He is Jesus incarnate. **What is the incarnation?** The incarnation is our belief that Jesus was born of the flesh and became human (he looked just like you and I) but he was God at the same time! We joyfully await the birth of Christ! **How long is Advent?** There are four Sundays in Advent. It goes from now until Christmas Eve, on December 24th. Remember that Advent is not the same as Christmas! We will celebrate Christmas in the weeks after Christmas day. **Are there any special traditions your family will practice at home to prepare for Christmas?** (ideas: Advent wreath, jesse tree, Advent calendar) **What colors do we see in Advent?** We will see a lot of purple, just like in Lent. The color purple reminds us to be prepared!
3. On November 30th, we celebrate the feast day of Saint Andrew! **Who was St. Andrew?** Saint Andrew was a fisherman! He was an apostle and close friend of Jesus. He was also a brother to St. Peter (known as Simon Peter). Before St. Andrew became an apostle to Jesus, he was actually a follower of St. John the Baptist (Jesus's cousin!)! After Christ's death and resurrection, St. Andrew continued to spread Christ's message as a missionary. He traveled to many countries spreading Jesus's Good News! It's fun to celebrate St. Andrew's feast day by eating fish- or even goldfish! **What is St. Andrew the patron saint of?** He is the patron saint of fishermen, singers and several countries: Scotland, Romania, Russia and Greece. *St. Andrew, pray for us*

Many families and individuals pray the Saint Andrew Novena during Advent. **What is a Novena?** It is a prayer that is said every day for at least 9 days! The St. Andrew prayer is meant to be prayed every day from the first day of Advent up until Christmas. To do the St. Andrew Novena, you pray the following prayer 15 times a day:

"Hail and blessed be the hour and the moment in which the Son of God was born of the most pure Virgin Mary, at midnight, in Bethlehem, in the piercing cold. In that hour vouchsafe, I beseech Thee, O my God, to hear my prayers and grant my desires through the merits of Our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of His blessed Mother."

- 4. The Church: What is the Sacristy?** Sacristy comes from the Latin word, *sacristra* which means "room near the sanctuary." **Do you remember where the sanctuary is?** It's the special area in the front of the Church where our eyes are focused. It is where the priest sits, and where the altar and the tabernacle are located. The sacristy, however is a room near the sanctuary where everything is kept for the celebration of the Mass. **What kinds of things are needed for Mass that may be kept in the sacristy?** The bread and wine, the sacred vessels, the books, the vestments for the priests and ministers
- 5. Order of Mass: What happens after the "Our Father," sign of peace, and Angus Dei prayers are said?** We are getting ready for Communion now. Together as a church, we say the words: "Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed (Luke 7:6)." **What does this mean?** These words remind us that we are never worthy to receive Jesus, but He will always come to us. Jesus wants us to seek Him, despite our unworthiness and imperfections. This is Jesus's love for us! Shortly after these words are said, we process to the front to receive Jesus in the Eucharist! What an incredible gift!

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