

CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE  
ADVENT SERVICE  
Dec.4<sup>th</sup>.2013

**Theme: Jesus, the Light of the World.**

**INTRODUCTION**

In the Christian church, Advent is a time of prayer that extends through the last four weeks before Christmas. During Advent we remember that kind of darkness that creeps into our hearts when we do not love God and others enough. We pray for an end to this sad darkness that makes us lonely, afraid, unhappy with ourselves and others. We remember Jesus, the Light of the World, who will help us to see better ways of Loving God and each other.

The figures of Isaias, John the Baptist and Our Lady are of great importance during advent. Isaias represents all the holy souls of the Old Testament who waited so long for the coming of the Redeemer. John the Baptist calls us to "Prepare a way for the Lord". The humility, prayer, and the loving service of Mary are the perfect qualities for Our Advent Spirit and Life. The longing of Isaias, the penance of John, and the prayer of Mary show us how to prepare for the birth of Christ.

**OPENING PRAYER**

Father, we share in the light of your glory through your Son, the Light of the World.

May the Light of Christ dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds so we can give you whole-hearted service.

We ask this through Christ your Son by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen

## READINGS

In our prayer lives we try to be open and listen to the voice of God within us. Tonight, let us try to relax as the room is darkened. Let us quiet ourselves and be aware of the presence of God in and around us ( soft music, room is darkened). Let us listen and experience the message of the Lord.

- Reader 1     In the beginning, God created heaven and earth.
- Reader2     The earth was dark and empty. (Pause in silence)
- Reader 1     And God said, “Let there be light”
- Reader 2     And there was light. **(Leader lights the large candle)**
- Reader 1     God covered the earth with all kinds of plants and animals. Then He made a man and called him Adam and a woman called Eve and placed them in a beautiful garden called Paradise. He gave them one command:
- Reader2     “Do not eat the fruit of this tree”.  
But the devil came and promised them greater knowledge if they disobeyed. And so, because they were proud and foolish, they listened to Satan, and betrayed their promise to God. They ate of the forbidden fruit .
- Reader 1     As punishment for their betrayal, God sent them out of the garden of paradise. From that moment on, human kind was made subject to sin, suffering and death.
- Reader 2     The light of God’s life was gone from their souls. The earth was plunged into darkness of sin and ignorance.  
**(Leader puts out large candle)**
- Reader 1     But God promised Adam and Eve that He would send a Redeemer who was to be a new light for the world, who would fill the souls of humankind. The people kept God’s promise in mind and looked forward with longing for the coming of the Redeemer.

**(Sing 2 verses of O Come, O Come Emmanuel)**

Reader 1 To remind people of His promise God sent certain people from time to time to be candles of light shining in the darkness.

Reader 2 God inspired prophets to tell about the coming of the Saviour. Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezechiel were such prophets. They spoke of a shepherd who would watch over them and care for them.

Reader 1 The people were told to have courage and fear not, for God would come to them. The deaf would hear and the blind would see. There would be no more sorrow or mourning.

Reader 2 At last a man came who was to prepare the people for the coming of the Redeemer- John the Baptist.

Reader 1 I, John, am the voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight His paths"

Reader 2 And the people asked "Are you the Promised One or shall we look for another?"

Reader 1 And he said, "There is one coming after me who is greater than I, whose sandal I am not worthy to untie."

Reader 2 Be ready, my people, to meet the Lord, for He is coming.  
**(Sing 2 verses of O Come Thou Long Expected Jesus or play soft music)**

**Responsorial Psalm**

R/. The Lord is my light and my help

The Lord is my light and my help;  
Whom shall I fear?

The Lord is the stronghold of my life.

Before whom shall I shrink? R/  
There is one thing I ask of the Lord,

For this I long.  
To live in the house of the Lord  
all the days of my Life.  
To savour the sweetness of the Lord,  
To behold his Temple. R/

I am sure I shall see the Lord's goodness  
In the land of the living  
Hope in him, hold firm and take heart  
Hope in the Lord! R/

Reader 1 In the fullness of time, God sent his angel to a maiden called Mary. Hail Mary, full of grace, The Lord is with you. Blest are you among women.

Reader 2 And the angel said, "Do not fear, Mary, for God is pleased with you. The Holy Spirit shall come upon you and you shall have a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He shall be great and people will know him as the son of God.

Reader 1 And Mary answered, "Behold the handmade of the Lord; be it done unto me according to thy word. My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he who is mighty has done great things to me and holy is his name.

Leader: And so the redeemer of the world came, for whom the people had waited for thousand of years.  
**(The large candle is lit)**

Because of his very great love for us, God sent his Son in the likeness of a man.

**(Light all the members' candles)**

This is the true light that enlightens every person who comes into the world.

We have seen is glory, glory as the only begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and truth.

**Sing Joy to the World**

## **Intercessions- Let Us Pray Together**

Response- Lord hear our Prayer

Lord, our God, help us to prepare for the coming of Christ your Son. May our homes be peaceful and joyous for Christmas, and may we learn the true spirit of Advent;

We pray to the Lord. **R/**

God of power and mercy, open our hearts in welcome of Christ, your Son. Remove the things that keep us from receiving Christ with joy, so that we share his wisdom and become one with him when he comes in glory;

We pray to the Lord. **R/**

Lord God may we, your people, who look forward to the birthday of Christ, know the joy of salvation and celebrate that feast with love and thanksgiving;

We pray to the Lord. **R/**

Lord, as Christmas draws near, Make us grow in faith, and love to celebrate the great feast of Christmas. Help us follow the example of Mary, who was always ready to do your will;

We pray to the Lord. **R/**

Lord, help us to see the needs of others. May each one of us share your love and joy with everyone we meet so that your light may shine more brightly in the darkness of this world;

We pray to the Lord. **R/**

### **Closing Prayer:**

God of Life, God of Hope,

Our hearts desire the warmth of your love and our minds are searching for the light of your word.

Increase our longing for Christ our Saviour and give us the strength to grow in love, that the dawn of his Coming may find us rejoicing in His presence and welcoming the light of His truth.

We ask this in the name of Jesus,

Who is God with us. Amen

