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ADVENT

Liturgical Colour— Purple



Advent is the first part of the Christmas season. The word advent, from Latin, means “the coming.” For centuries, Advent has been a time of spiritual reflection as well as celebration and anticipation. For Christians it is a time of looking back and looking forward; a time of celebrating the Nativity on Christmas Day and anticipating the time when Jesus will come again.

This is an Advent symbol of Jesus from Rev 1:8 and 22:13: "I am the Alpha and the Omega [the first and the last, the beginning and the end], says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty" (see also Isaiah 44:6).

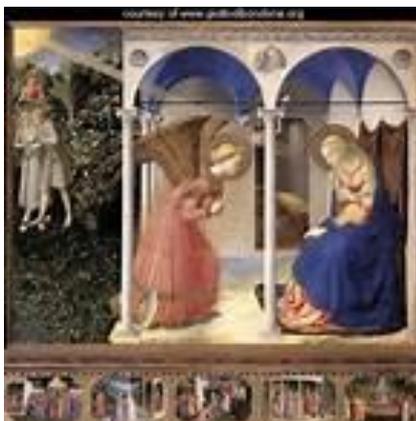
The blue letter is the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, Aleph, and the purple is the last letter of the Greek alphabet, Omega. Not only does this symbolize the One who has come and will come again, it also emphasizes the continuity of God's work in history throughout both the Old and New Testaments.

Overall theme could be—Waiting in Expectation, looking forward

Some aims for Advent

To help the children understand:

- how Christians get ready for Christmas
- that John was the messenger helping people to get ready for Jesus
- Christmas as a time of God's love being shown to all people
- that Mary was happy to do what God wanted her to do



Stations of the Nativity

First Station, The Annunciation—Luke 1: 26—38

Second Station, The Visitation—Luke 1:39-45

Third Station, The Song of Mary—Luke 1:46-55

Fourth Station, The Birth of John the Baptist—Like 1:57-66

Fifth Station, The Prophecy of Zechariah—Luke 1:67-79

Sixth Station, Joseph's Dream—Matthew—1:18-23

Seventh Station, Joseph takes Mary into His Home—Matthew 1:24-25

Eighth Station, The Journey to Bethlehem—Luke 2:15-20

Ninth Station, The Birth of Jesus—Luke 2:6-7

Tenth Station, The Announcement of the Angels—Luke 2:8-14

Eleventh Station, The Shepherds Share the Good News—Luke 2:15-20

Twelfth Station, The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple—Luke 2:22-24

Thirteenth Station, The Blessing of Simeon—Luke 2:28-32

Fourteenth Station, The Wise Men Come from the East

The Stations of the Nativity can be used to focus the children's thoughts and be used to help build the story of the birth of Jesus as you move through December. Pictures can be placed around the hall to illustrate the readings. (See set of pictures on Diocesan website) This can be done one at a time or placed at the beginning of the month, then introducing the readings at planned intervals. They can be used simply to tell the story of the Nativity and provide opportunities for prayer or as a focus for reflection on what the coming of Jesus means to Christians.

Resources

Assemblies from the Gallery, Margaret Cooling ISBN 978-1-85175-335-2

Born Among Us, USPG (an all-age Christmas resource inspired by the world church)

Sister Wendy's Story of Christmas ISBN 3-7913-1887-X (at the time of writing Amazon has this listed as costing over £32 but it's a very thin book and mine cost £9.95 so this may be a mistake. Certainly not worth £32 but they have used ones starting from 1p!)

Godly Play—Book 3 Complete Guide to Godly Play

Piano Quartet in E-Major

CD—The Musical Advent Calendar Hänssler Classic—a number to choose from

Hymns

Light the Advent Candle One

Longing for Light (Christ be our light)

O come, O come, Emmanuel

Wait for the Lord (Taizé)

Lord Jesus at your coming

The angel Gabriel from heaven came

Jesus name above all names

Light a candle in the window