

A NOTE TO PARENTS

The four weeks of Advent are our preparation for Christmas, when we celebrate the coming of the Son of God as Jesus of Nazareth, a human baby, born of a particular woman in a particular stable on a particular night long ago. But in waiting to celebrate that coming, we do not simply project ourselves into the long-ago waiting of Israel before the birth of the Savior. Instead, we bring that waiting forward in time: we wait for the renewed coming of the Savior into our own lives, and we look forward to his final coming at the end of time. Advent says to us that our faith is not only about things that happened long ago. It tells us that those long-ago events establish a pattern that still yields meaning for today, and that awaits a coming fulfillment by God for the whole world. Advent is about our past, our present, and our future.

Advent, therefore, is about *time*, and this is poignantly true for both children and adults in our society. For adults, these four short weeks before the most elaborate holiday in our culture force us to face the limits of time: there is simply not enough time to finish all that we expect to get done before that dreaded moment arrives: sunset on Christmas Eve. Instead of *waiting* for Christmas, we are trying to fend it off; instead of saying, "Come, Lord Jesus!" we want to cry out, "Jesus, wait! I'm not ready! Give me a couple more days!" But for children, Advent seems terribly long. *They can hardly wait ...* with the Advent wreath, they count the Sundays; with the Advent calendar, they count the days till Christmas—not with dread but with eager longing.

The Scriptures in Advent do tell us to "get ready." But we are to get ready like children, by being eager, alert and watchful—by *active waiting*, rather than by frantic preparations. Look with your child at the pictures of people waiting, on the reverse of this page. Talk about how hard it is to wait for something you want. Can the people do anything to make the thing they are waiting for come sooner? What do they need to do to be ready? Notice how much of your life consists of waiting! Can Advent teach you and your child to wait more gracefully?

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JUNIOR

Year C
1st SUNDAY
in
ADVENT



THIS IS THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

ADVENT is the beginning of a new church year. Advent is when we wait for Christmas.



ADVENT means "coming." Long ago, Jesus came to live with us.



Advent is a time of waiting. We wait for Christmas to come. We remember all the ways that God has come to his people. We think of how God comes to us, to fill our hearts with love and hope.

All these people are waiting. Who or what are they waiting for? What are they feeling?



Jesus still comes to earth. When we love him and believe in him, he comes to our hearts.



Some day, Jesus will come again, to be our King.

