



FAMILY ADVENT PRAYERS

Blessing of Advent Wreath and Lighting of Advent Candles

The use of the Advent Wreath is a traditional practice which has found its place in the church as well as in the home. The blessing of an Advent Wreath takes place on the First Sunday of Advent or on the evening before the First Sunday of Advent.

Customarily the Advent Wreath is constructed of a circle of evergreen branches into which are inserted four candles. According to tradition, three of the candles are violet and the fourth is rose. However, four violet or white candles may also be used.

The candles represent the four weeks of Advent and the number of candles lighted each week corresponds to the number of the current week of Advent. The rose candle is lighted on the Third Sunday of Advent, also known as Gaudete Sunday.

When the blessing of the Advent Wreath is celebrated in the home, it is appropriate that it be blessed by a parent or another member of the family.

When the Advent Wreath is used in the home, the Word of God is proclaimed and a prayer is recited when the candles are lighted. The lighting of the candles may be preceded or followed by an Advent hymn. The lighting of the Advent Wreath may fittingly be included as a part of the evening meal.

ORDER FOR THE BLESSING OF AN ADVENT WREATH

INTRODUCTORY RITES

When the members of the family have gathered, the head of the family says:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All make the sign of the cross and respond:
Amen.

The head of the family greets those present in the following words:

Let us praise God, who enlightens every heart, now and forever.

All:
Amen.

In the following or similar words, the head of the family prepares those present for the blessing.

My brothers and sisters, today we begin the season of Advent. We open our hearts to God's love as we prepare to welcome Christ into our lives and homes. The candles of this wreath remind us that Jesus Christ came to conquer the darkness of sin and to lead us into the light of his glorious kingdom.

READING OF THE WORD OF GOD

Matthew 1:18-25

A member of the family reads a text of sacred Scripture.

Brothers and sisters, let us listen to the reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew:

The birth of Jesus.

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the Holy Spirit. Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means "God is with us." When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home. He had no relations with her until she bore a son, and he named him Jesus.

The Gospel of the Lord.

R. Praise to you Lord, Jesus Christ.

INTERCESSIONS

The head of the family says:

Christ came to bring us salvation and has promised to come again. Let us pray that we may be always ready to welcome him.

All:

Come, Lord Jesus.

A member of the family:

That the keeping of Advent may open our hearts to God's love, we pray to the Lord. R.

That the light of Christ may penetrate the darkness of sin, we pray to the Lord. R.

That this wreath may constantly remind us to prepare for the coming of Christ, we pray to the Lord. R.

That the Christmas season may fill us with peace and joy as we strive to follow the example of Jesus, we pray to the Lord. R.

After the intercessions the head of the family, in the following or similar words, invites all present to sing or say the "Lord's Prayer".

At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching we dare to say:

All:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed by thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

The head of the family says the prayer with hands joined.

**Lord God,
your Church joyfully awaits
the coming of its Savior,
who enlightens our hearts
and dispels the darkness
of ignorance and sin.
Pour forth your blessings upon us
as we light the candles of this wreath;
may their light reflect
the splendor of Christ,
who is Lord, forever and ever.**

All:

Amen.

The first candle (violet) is lighted.

CONCLUDING RITE

The head of the family concludes the rite by signing himself or herself with the sign of the cross and saying:

May the light of Christ lead us to the joy of his kingdom, now and forever.

All:

Amen.

It is preferable to end the celebration with a suitable song.



LIGHTING OF SECOND ADVENT CANDLE

INTRODUCTORY RITES

When the members of the family have gathered, the head of the family says:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All make the sign of the cross and respond:
Amen.

The head of the family greets those present in the following words:

Let us praise God, who enlightens every heart, now and forever.

All:
Amen.

READING OF THE WORD OF GOD

Mark 1:1-8

A member of the family reads a text of sacred Scripture.

Brothers and sisters, let us listen to the reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark:

Make straight the paths of the Lord.

**As it is written in Isaiah the prophet:
Behold, I am sending my messenger
ahead of you; he will prepare your way.**

**A voice of one crying out in the desert:
“Prepare the way of the Lord, make
straight his paths.”**

The Gospel of the Lord.

R. Praise to you Lord, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

The head of the family says the prayer with hands joined.

**Almighty and merciful God,
may no earthly undertaking
hinder those who set out in haste
to meet your Son,
but may our learning of heavenly wisdom
gain us admittance to his company.
Who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.**

All:
Amen.

The second candle (violet) is lighted.

CONCLUDING RITE

The head of the family concludes the rite by signing himself or herself with the sign of the cross and saying:

**May the light of Christ lead us to the joy
of his kingdom, now and forever.**

All:
Amen.

It is preferable to end the celebration with a suitable song.



LIGHTING OF THIRD ADVENT CANDLE

INTRODUCTORY RITES

When the members of the family have gathered, the head of the family says:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All make the sign of the cross and respond:
Amen.

The head of the family greets those present in the following words:

Let us praise God, who enlightens every heart, now and forever.

All:
Amen.

READING OF THE WORD OF GOD

John 1:6-8, 19-28

A member of the family reads a text of sacred Scripture.

Brothers and sisters, let us listen to the reading from the holy Gospel according to John:

There is one among you whom you do not recognize.
“I baptize with water; but there is one among you whom you do not recognize, the one who is coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

R. Praise to you Lord, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

The head of the family says the prayer with hands joined.

O God, who see how your people faithfully await the feast of the Lord’s Nativity, enable us, we pray, to attain the joys of so great a salvation and to celebrate them always with solemn worship and glad rejoicing. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

All:
Amen.

The third candle (rose or pink) is lighted.

CONCLUDING RITE

The head of the family concludes the rite by signing himself or herself with the sign of the cross and saying:

May the light of Christ lead us to the joy of his kingdom, now and forever.

All:
Amen.

It is preferable to end the celebration with a suitable song.



LIGHTING OF FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE

INTRODUCTORY RITES

When the members of the family have gathered, the head of the family says:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All make the sign of the cross and respond:
Amen.

The head of the family greets those present in the following words:

Let us praise God, who enlightens every heart, now and forever.

All:
Amen.

READING OF THE WORD OF GOD

Luke 1:26-38

A member of the family reads a text of sacred Scripture.

Brothers and sisters, let us listen to the reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke:

Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son.
“Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of

David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

R. Praise to you Lord, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

The head of the family says the prayer with hands joined.

**Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord,
your grace into our hearts,
that we, to whom the Incarnation
of Christ your Son
was made known
by the message of an Angel,
may by his Passion and Cross
be brought to the glory
of his Resurrection.
Who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.**

All:
Amen.

The fourth candle (violet) is lighted.

CONCLUDING RITE

The head of the family concludes the rite by signing himself or herself with the sign of the cross and saying:

**May the light of Christ lead us to the joy
of his kingdom, now and forever.**

All:
Amen.

It is preferable to end the celebration with a suitable song.



Archdiocesan Liturgical Commission
Manila



TABLE LITURGY
FOR THE
FEAST OF CHRISTMAS



TABLE LITURGY FOR THE FEAST OF CHRISTMAS

The family stands in prayerful silence around their table upon which there are two unlighted candles. After a few moments, the father of the family begins.

Father:

Blessed are You, Lord our God,
who has gathered us together
at this our Christmas feasting table.

Mother:

As we light our candles
on this feast of light,
may the eternal light of God
that shines with splendor in the stars
shine upon our table and fill our home.
May the spirit of God
that shone in the star of Bethlehem
surround our table
and fill our food and our hearts
with its holy light.

The candles are lighted.

Father:

Let us, each,
on this great and holy feast
of the birth of our Savior
pause now and, in silence,
lift up our hearts to God in gratitude.

Pause for silent prayer.

Father or Mother:

Lord of All Gifts,
our home is filled
with joy and great beauty
on this feast of Christmas.
We each come to this
our Christmas feast
with eagerness and a happy heart.
As a family,
we thank You for the gifts of food
upon our table,
mindful that You, our God,
make every day of the year a Christmas
where we are gifted by You.
We thank You that we are together
to share the happiness
of this ancient holy day.
[We thank You for the presence
of our guests, _____,
who, by their being present
in our home,
have added to the brightness
of our celebration.]

Father or Mother:

Lord of All Gifts,
Holy Father of our Savior Jesus,
with fulness of heart
we now ask Your holy blessing
upon our food,
and upon our family
[and our honored guests
who have joined us for this great feast].
May Your blessing be upon us all,
in the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

All:

Merry Christmas or A Blessed Christmas!



BLESSING AND VENERATION OF THE
IMAGE OF THE INFANT JESUS AT HOME

&

ORDER FOR THE BLESSING OF HOMES
(During the Christmas Season/At the Beginning of the Year)



BLESSING AND VENERATION OF THE IMAGE OF THE INFANT JESUS AT HOME

READING OF THE WORD OF GOD

Luke 2:15-20

A member of the family reads a text of sacred Scripture.

Brothers and sisters, let us now listen to the holy Gospel according to Luke:

Now when the angels had gone from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us.' So they hurried away and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. When they saw the child they repeated what they had been told about him, and everyone who heard it was astonished at what the shepherds had to say. As for Mary, she treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds went back glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen; it was exactly as they had been told.

The Gospel of the Lord.

R. Praise to you Lord, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

God, our Father
you so loved humankind
that you sent us your only Son Jesus,
born of the Virgin Mary,
to save us and lead us back to you.

We pray that with your Blessing
these images of Jesus,
who is about to come among us,
may be a sign of your presence and
love in our homes.

Good Father,
give your Blessing to us too,
to our parents, to our families and
to our friends.

Open our hearts,
so that we may be able to
receive Jesus in joy,
always do what he asks
and see him in all those
who are in need of our love.

We ask you this in the name of Jesus,
your beloved Son
who comes to give the world peace.

He lives and reigns forever and ever.
Amen.

The members of the family venerate the image of the infant Jesus.



ORDER FOR THE BLESSING OF HOMES

(During the Christmas Season/
At the Beginning of the Year)

INTRODUCTION

During the Christmas season, preferably at the beginning of the new year, homes and families may be blessed. The occasion provides a special opportunity for a gathering of the members of the family to mark the joyful event and to thank God, from whom all blessings come, for the gift of a home where the family lives in love.

The head of the family leads the prayers.

ORDER OF BLESSING

INTRODUCTORY RITES

The head of the family says:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All make the sign of the cross and respond:

Amen.

The head of the family greets those present in the following words:

May the God whom we glorify with one heart and voice enable us, through the Spirit, to live in harmony as followers of Christ Jesus, now and forever.

All:

Amen.

In the following or similar words, the head of the family prepares those present for the blessing.

When Christ took flesh through the Blessed Virgin Mary, he made his home with us. Let us now pray that he remains in this home and bless it with his presence. May he always be here among you; may he nurture your love for each other, share in your joys, comfort you in your sorrows. Inspired by his teachings and example, seek to make your new home before all else a dwelling place of love, diffusing far and wide the goodness of Christ.

READING OF THE WORD OF GOD

Luke 19:1-10

A member of the family reads a text of sacred Scripture.

Brothers and sisters, let us now listen to the holy Gospel according to Luke:

Today salvation has come to this house.

At that time Jesus came to Jericho and intended to pass through the town. Now a man there named Zacchaeus, who was a chief tax collector and also a wealthy man, was seeking to see who Jesus was; but he could not see him because of the crowd, for he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree in order to see Jesus, who was about to pass that way. When he reached the place, Jesus looked up and said, "Zacchaeus, come down quickly, for today I must stay at your house." And he came down quickly and received him with joy. When they saw this, they began to grumble, saying, "He has gone to stay at the house of a sinner." But

Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, “Behold, half of my possessions, Lord, I shall give to the poor, and if I have extorted anything from anyone I shall repay it four times over.” And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house because this man too is a descendant of Abraham. For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save what was lost.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

R. Praise to you Lord, Jesus Christ.

INTERCESSIONS

The head of the family says:

The Son of God, Lord of heaven and earth, made his home among us. With thanks and praise let us call upon him, saying:

All:

Stay with us, Lord.

A member of the family:

Lord Jesus Christ, by your life with Mary and Joseph you sanctified the life of the home; dwell with us in our home, so that we may have you as our guest and honor you as our Head. (For this we pray:) R.

In you every dwelling grows into a holy temple; grant that those who live in this house may be built up together into the dwelling place of God in the Holy Spirit. (For this we pray:) R.

You taught your followers to build their houses upon solid rock; grant that the members of this family may hold fast to your teachings and, free of all discord, serve you with their whole heart. (For this we pray:) R.

You had no place to lay your head, but in uncomplaining poverty you accepted the hospitality of your friends; grant that through our help the homeless may obtain proper housing. (For this we pray:) R.

Lord Jesus Christ, you became flesh of the Virgin Mary: grant that your presence may be known always in this home. (For this we pray:) R.

LORD'S PRAYER

After the intercessions the head of the family, in the following or similar words, invites all present to sing or say the “Lord’s Prayer”.

As children of God, we confidently pray:

All:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed by thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

The head of the family says the prayer with hands joined.

**Lord God of heaven and earth,
you revealed your only-begotten Son
to every nation
by the guidance of a star.**

**Bless this house and all who inhabit it.
Fill them with the light of Christ,
that their concern for others
may reflect your love.**

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All:

Amen.

After the prayer of blessing, the head of the family sprinkles those present and the home with holy water, he says:

**Let this water call to mind our baptism
into Christ, who has redeemed us by his
death and resurrection.**

All:

Amen.

CONCLUDING RITE

The head of the family concludes the rite by signing himself or herself with the sign of the cross and saying:

**May the God of glory fill our hearts with
peace and joy, now and for ever.**

All:

Amen.

It is preferable to end the celebration with a suitable song.



FAMILY CHRISTMAS PRAYERS

Blessing of Christmas Manger or Nativity Scene,
Christmas Tree and “Parol”



ORDER FOR THE BLESSING OF A CHRISTMAS MANGER OR NATIVITY SCENE

In its present form the custom of displaying figures depicting the birth of Jesus Christ owes its origin to Saint Francis of Assisi who made the Christmas crèche or manger for Christmas eve of 1223.

However, as early as the fourth century representations of the nativity of the Lord were painted as wall decorations depicting not only the infancy narrative accounts of Christ's birth, but also the words of the prophets Isaiah and Habakkuk taken to mean that the Messiah would be born in the midst of animals in a manger.

The blessing of the Christmas manger or nativity scene, according to pastoral circumstances, may take place on the Vigil of Christmas or at another more suitable time.

The blessing may be given during a celebration of the word of God, during Mass, or even during another service, e.g., a carol service.

When the manger is set up in the home, it is appropriate that it be blessed by a parent or another family member; the shorter rite may be used for this purpose.

A form of this rite is also found in Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers.

The blessing may be given by a priest, deacon, or a lay minister.

INTRODUCTORY RITES

When the members of the family have gathered, a suitable song may be sung. After the singing, the head of the family says:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All make the sign of the cross and respond:
Amen.

The head of the family greets those present in the following words:

Praised be Jesus Christ, who dwells among us, now and forever.

All:
Amen.

In the following or similar words, the head of the family prepares those present for the blessing.

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ, we pause to bless this Christmas manger scene. The practice of erecting such mangers was begun by Saint Francis of Assisi as a means to set forth the message of Christmas. When we look upon these figures, the Christmas gospel comes alive and we are moved to rejoice in the mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God.

READING OF THE WORD OF GOD

Luke 2:1-8

A member of the family reads a text of sacred Scripture.

Brothers and sisters, let us listen to the reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke:

The birth of Jesus.

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole world should be enrolled. This was the first enrollment, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. So all went to be enrolled, each to his own town. And Joseph too went up from Galilee from the town of Nazareth to Judea, to the city of David that is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there, the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. Now there were shepherds in that region living in the fields and keeping the night watch over their flock.

The Gospel of the Lord.

R. Praise to you Lord, Jesus Christ.

INTERCESSIONS

The head of the family says:

Let us ask for God's blessing on this Christmas manger and upon ourselves, that we who reflect on the birth of Jesus may share in the salvation he accomplished.

All:

Come, Lord, dwell with us.

A member of the family:

For the Church of God, as we recall the circumstances surrounding the birth of Christ, that we may always proclaim his gift of new life for all people, we pray to the Lord. R.

For the world in which we live, that it may come to recognize Christ who was greeted by the angels and shepherds, we pray to the Lord. R.

For our families and our homes, that Christ who was laid in the manger may dwell with us always, we pray to the Lord. R.

For parents, that their love for their children may be modeled on that of the Virgin Mary and Saint Joseph, we pray to the Lord. R.

After the intercessions the head of the family, in the following or similar words, invites all present to sing or say the “Lord’s Prayer”.

At the Savior’s command and formed by divine teaching we dare to say:

All:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed by thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

The head of the family says the prayer with hands joined.

God of every nation and people,
from the very beginning of creation
you have made manifest your love:
when our need for a Savior was great
you sent your Son
to be born of the Virgin Mary.
To our lives he brings joy and peace,
justice, mercy, and love.

Lord,
bless all who look upon this manger;
may it remind us
of the humble birth of Jesus,
and raise up our thoughts to him,
who is God-with-us and Savior of all,
and who lives and reigns
forever and ever.

All:

Amen.

CONCLUDING RITE

The head of the family concludes the rite by signing himself or herself with the sign of the cross and saying:

May almighty God, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and protect us.

All:

Amen.

It is preferable to end the celebration with a suitable song.



ORDER FOR THE BLESSING OF A CHRISTMAS TREE

The use of the Christmas tree is relatively modern. Its origins are found in the medieval mystery plays which depicted the tree of paradise and the Christmas light or candle which symbolized Christ, the Light of the world.

According to custom, the Christmas tree is set up just before Christmas and may remain in place until the solemnity of Epiphany. Although the primary place for the Christmas tree is the home, at times one or more may also be placed in the church. In such a case, the decoration of the trees should be appropriate to their use in the church, and care should be taken that they do not interfere with the requirements of the liturgical space.

The Christmas tree may be blessed on or before Christmas during a celebration of the word of God, or during Morning or Evening Prayer.

If the blessing is celebrated during Morning or Evening Prayer, it takes place after the gospel canticle. The intercessions, Lord's Prayer, and prayer of blessing replace the intercessions and concluding prayer of Morning or Evening Prayer.

The lights of the tree are illuminated after the prayer of blessing.

In the home the Christmas tree may be blessed by a parent or another family member, in connection with the evening meal on the Vigil of Christmas or at another suitable time on Christmas Day; the shorter rite may be used for this purpose.

These orders may be used by a priest or a deacon, and also by a layperson, who follows the rites and prayers designated for a lay minister.

INTRODUCTORY RITES

When the members of the family have gathered, a suitable song may be sung. After the singing, the head of the family says:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All make the sign of the cross and respond:
Amen.

The head of the family greets those present in the following words:

Let us glorify Christ our light, who brings salvation and peace into our midst, now and for ever.

All:
Amen.

In the following or similar words, the head of the family prepares those present for the blessing.

My brothers and sisters, amidst signs and wonders Christ Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea: his birth brings joy to our hearts and enlightenment to our minds. With this tree, decorated and adorned, may we welcome Christ among us; may its lights guide us to the perfect light.

READING OF THE WORD OF GOD

Titus 3:4-7

A member of the family reads a text of sacred Scripture.

Brothers and sisters, let us listen to the words of the apostle Paul to Titus:

His own compassion saved us.

But when the kindness and generous love of God our savior appeared, not because of any righteous deeds we had done but because of his mercy, he saved us through the bath of rebirth and renewal by the holy Spirit, whom he richly poured out on us through Jesus Christ our savior, so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life.

The Word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

INTERCESSIONS

The head of the family says:

Let us ask God to send his blessing upon us and upon this sign of our faith in the Lord.

All:

Lord, give light to our hearts.

A member of the family:

That the Church may always reflect the joy of Jesus Christ who enlightens our hearts, we pray to the Lord. **R.**

That this tree of lights may remind us of the tree of glory on which Christ accomplished our salvation, we pray to the Lord. **R.**

That the joy of Christmas may always be in our homes, we pray to the Lord. **R.**

That the peace of Christ may dwell in our hearts and in the world, we pray to the Lord. **R.**

After the intercessions the head of the family, in the following or similar words, invites all present to sing or say the "Lord's Prayer".

With confident faith let us pray as Christ taught us:

All:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed by thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

The head of the family says the prayer with hands joined.

**Holy Lord,
we come with joy
to celebrate the birth of your Son,
who rescued us from the darkness of sin
by making the cross
a tree of life and light.**

**May this tree, arrayed in splendor,
remind us of the life-giving cross of Christ,
that we may always rejoice
in the new life that shines in our hearts.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.**

All:

Amen.

The candles or lights of the tree are then illuminated.

During the illumination of the tree, a member of the family leads in singing the following acclamations to Christ, or some other suitable hymn, such as “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.”

Lord Jesus, Son of God and Son of Mary.

R. We welcome you, O Lord.

Lord Jesus, hope of the shepherds and the poor.

R. We welcome you, O Lord.

Lord Jesus, glory of the angels.

R. We welcome you, O Lord.

CONCLUDING RITE

The head of the family concludes the rite by signing himself or herself with the sign of the cross and saying:

May the God of glory fill our hearts with peace and joy, now and for ever.

All:

Amen.

It is preferable to end the celebration with a suitable song.



ORDER FOR THE BLESSING OF A “PAROL”

INTRODUCTORY RITES

When the members of the family have gathered, a suitable song may be sung. After the singing, the head of the family says:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All make the sign of the cross and respond:
Amen.

The head of the family greets those present in the following words:

Let us glorify Christ our light, who brings salvation and peace into our midst, now and for ever.

All:
Amen.

In the following or similar words, the head of the family prepares those present for the blessing.

My brothers and sisters, amidst signs and wonders Christ Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea: his birth brings joy to our hearts and enlightenment to our minds. With this star, adorned and lighted, may we welcome Christ among us; may its lights guide us to the perfect light.

READING OF THE WORD OF GOD

Matthew 2:1-12

A member of the family proclaims a text of sacred Scripture.

Brothers and sisters, let us listen to the reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew:

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, “Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage.” When King Herod heard this, he was greatly troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. Assembling all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it has been written through the prophet:

And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; since from you shall come a ruler, who is to shepherd my people Israel.”

Then Herod called the magi secretly and ascertained from them the time of the star’s appearance. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search diligently for the child. When you have found him, bring me word, that I too may go and do him homage.” After their audience with the king they set out. And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child

was. They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their country by another way.

The Gospel of the Lord.

R. Praise to you Lord, Jesus Christ.

INTERCESSIONS

The head of the family says:

Let us ask God to send his blessing upon us and upon this sign of our faith in the Lord.

All:

Lord, give light to our hearts.

A member of the family:

That the Church may always reflect the joy of Jesus Christ who enlightens our hearts, we pray to the Lord. **R.**

That the light of this “parol” may remind us of the light of Christ and our call to be children of the light, we pray to the Lord. **R.**

That the joy of Christmas may always be in our homes, we pray to the Lord. **R.**

That the peace of Christ may dwell in our hearts and in the world, we pray to the Lord. **R.**

After the intercessions the head of the family, in the following or similar words, invites all present to sing or say the “Lord’s Prayer”.

With confident faith let us pray as Christ taught us:

All:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed by thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

The head of the family says the prayer with hands joined.

**O God,
who revealed your Only Begotten Son
to the nations
by the guidance of a star,
grant in your mercy,
that we, who know you already by faith,
may be brought to behold
the beauty of your sublime glory.**

**Let your blessing come upon us
as we illumine this “parol”.
May the light and joy it gives
remind us that we must always walk
as children of the light.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.**

All:

Amen.

CONCLUDING RITE

The head of the family concludes the rite by signing himself or herself with the sign of the cross and saying:

**May the God of glory fill our hearts with
peace and joy, now and for ever.**

All:

Amen.

It is preferable to end the celebration with a suitable song.



Archdiocesan Liturgical Commission
Manila