

# Mission Together

## Advent Liturgical Prayer: Week Two



**Introduction for teachers / leaders:** The season of Advent begins four Sundays before Christmas and spans four weeks. It is a time of preparation, when we recall the Israelites' long wait for the Messiah's birth and remember that Jesus was born into the world and will come again. Advent symbols help us prepare for, and understand, the significance of God becoming one of us. The most recognisable of these symbols is the Advent wreath. Its circular shape represents God's never-ending presence. The evergreen leaves signify God's constancy. The four candles are lit as we journey through the weeks of Advent; the central white candle is lit on Christmas day. All the candles represent Christ, light of the world.

### Liturgy Plan

The liturgy and activities focus on waiting with patience and hope for God's promised Saviour.

### GATHER: Setting the scene

Please refer to our guide: *How to Pray with Children*  
[missiontogether.org.uk/prayer-resources/](http://missiontogether.org.uk/prayer-resources/)

### Opening hymn or recorded music

Suggested hymn: *We are Waiting* by Claud Fullwood.  
[missiontogether.org.uk/sing-with-mission-together](http://missiontogether.org.uk/sing-with-mission-together)

### Sign of the cross, opening prayer and lighting of the Advent wreath

Print the opening prayer on page 2 and ask pupil to read.

### Introduction

Print the introduction on page 2 and ask pupil to read.

### WORD: Bible reading (ICB, Year A): Matthew 3:1-6+

Print the reading on page 2 and ask pupils to read.

### Bible reflection

See page 3. We suggest this is delivered by a teacher / chaplain.

### RESPOND: Prayers of intercession

Print the prayers of intercession on page 4 and ask pupils to read.

### SENT: Mission Together prayer

See to the right.

### Sign of the cross

### Closing hymn or recorded music

Our suggestions: *Maranatha*

### Follow up activities

*The Crier* Newspaper Article Activity (KS1/2)



### Mission Together Prayer

May all children  
In the world  
Share love  
Share friendship and live  
In the peace  
Of God's love  
Now and forever. **Amen.**

Mission Together is the children's branch of Missio, the Pope's charity for world mission.

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**missio**



**Sign of the cross, lighting of the Advent Wreath and opening prayer**

*Invite a pupil to light the candle*

**Reader:** God our Father, as we light our second Advent candle, help us to prepare prayerfully for the birth of your Son, Jesus. Show us ways we can share Christ's light during Advent, so that the world might know the hope and love that your Son brings. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Introduction

**Reader:** Today we light the second candle on our Advent wreath. Each week we will light an extra candle and watch as the light from the wreath grows brighter. The growing light is a sign of our growing expectation as we wait in hope for our Saviour, Jesus.

**Reader:** Hundreds of years before the birth of Jesus, people had been waiting for the coming of the saviour. During those long years, God had spoken through many prophets. God asked the prophets to guide the people and to remind them of His mercy and love.

**Reader:** Today we hear from the prophet who proclaimed the good news that Jesus was the saviour the world had been waiting for. This prophet was John the Baptist.

**Reader:** John was faithful and courageous. He urged people to be sorry for their wrongdoing and invited them to change their lives. Some ignored John, but others chose to be baptised by him.

**Reader:** John baptised the people so they were ready to welcome their saviour, Jesus. Pay attention now to the ways John the Baptist asks us to prepare the way for Jesus.

## Bible reading: From the Gospel of St Matthew 3:1-6

**Reader:** About that time John the Baptist came and began preaching in the desert area of Judea. John said, "Change your hearts and lives because the kingdom of heaven is coming soon." John the Baptist is the one Isaiah the prophet was talking about. Isaiah said: "This is a voice of a man who calls out in the desert: 'Prepare the way for the Lord. Make the road straight for him.'"

The Gospel of the Lord. **R/ Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Mission Together**

**We hear God's Word**  
A reading from the Gospel of Matthew



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The Gospel of the Lord  
**R/ Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**



## Bible Reflection (We suggest this is delivered by a teacher / chaplain)

In the Bible reading we just heard from the Gospel of St Matthew, the prophets John the Baptist and Isaiah have an unusual way of asking us to prepare for Jesus. They say, 'Prepare the way for the Lord. Make the road straight for him.'

This sounds like a strange instruction; to make the road straight. But when we understand that that John and Isaiah were using metaphors it makes much more sense.



Many of you will know that a metaphor is a word or a phrase used to describe something as if it were something else. John and Isaiah aren't really talking about straightening out winding or bumpy roads that make a journey long or difficult (like the one in the painting on the screen). But they are talking about us clearing away the thoughts and behaviour that might prevent us from welcoming Jesus into our hearts at Christmas.

Because Jesus wants to be close to us, to live in our hearts, John and Isaiah encouraged the people, and encourage us, to make the path to our hearts smooth, so that Jesus can reach us easily. Let's think about how we can do this.

I want you to imagine that it is Christmas Eve and you are expecting a visit from someone that you love and respect very much. You've really been looking forward to seeing them. But just before your visitor arrives you refused to share your sweets with a family member and this caused a big argument.

When your visitor arrives, you're all still upset with one another and this has left you feeling miserable. There's two things you could do. You could stay miserable when your visitor arrives; or you could say Sorry to the people you've upset, forgive, make peace, and try to learn from your mistakes.

If you stayed miserable you risk making your visitor feel uncomfortable and upset too. But if you made peace before your visitor arrives, you could all have a lovely time together. You'd get to spend time with your visitor and share good news and gifts with them.

This is the way the prophets John and Isaiah want us to prepare a smooth path for Jesus: by being sorry, by making peace, by changing our wrong behaviours, by learning from mistakes.

Let's pray for the courage to do that now through our **prayers of intercession**.



## Prayers of Intercession

**Reader:** The response to our prayer is: **Hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** Heavenly Father, help us to prepare the way for your Son this Advent, by saying sorry for our wrongs and by forgiving others theirs.  
Lord, in your mercy...

**Reader:** Heavenly Father, help us to prepare the way for your Son this Advent, by being peace-builders in our school, home, country, and world.  
Lord, in your mercy...

**Reader:** Heavenly Father, help us to prepare the way for your Son this Advent, by sharing what we have so that no one lacks what they need.  
Lord, in your mercy...

**Reader:** Heavenly Father, help us to prepare the way for your Son this Advent, by praying for all God's children, especially those born into poverty and conflict.  
Lord, in your mercy...

**Reader:** Let us now say the Mission Together prayer.

**May all children  
In the world  
Share love  
Share friendship and live  
In the peace  
Of God's love,  
Now and forever. Amen.**

**Mission Together**

**We respond**

*The response to our prayer is: Hear our prayer.*

Heavenly Father, help us to prepare the way for your Son this Advent, by saying sorry for our wrongs and by forgiving others theirs.  
Lord, in your mercy. **R/ Hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, help us to prepare the way for your Son this Advent, by being peace-builders in our school, home, country, and world.  
Lord in your mercy. **R/ Hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, help us to prepare the way for your Son this Advent, by sharing what we have so that no one lacks what they need.  
Lord in your mercy. **R/ Hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, help us to prepare the way for your Son this Advent, by praying for all God's children, especially those who born into poverty and war.  
Lord, in your mercy. **R/ Hear our prayer.**

Let us now say the Mission Together prayer.

**Mission Together**

**We are sent**

**May all children  
In the world  
Share love  
Share friendship and live  
In the peace  
Of God's love,  
Now and forever.  
Amen.**

## Sign of the cross

**Closing hymn or recorded music:** *Maranatha*

# Fundraising Ideas



Mission Together is the children's branch of Missio – the Catholic Church's official children's charity for overseas mission. Thanks to children in England and Wales, we can provide life-changing aid around the world in whatever form it's needed. That could be a new school, feeding programme, or a generator for a children's home. Mission Together helps all children, regardless of background or beliefs. That's how we show the all-embracing nature of the Catholic Church and the true meaning of 'mission'.

Fundraising is a brilliant way to involve everyone in raising money for Mission Together. Below are a few seasonal ideas but you can find other ways to get involved throughout the year by visiting our webpage <https://missiontogether.org.uk/fundraising-ideas/>

Please **share your fundraising events** with us @MissioUK, adding the hashtag #missiontogether

## Ideas for Autumn term

**Rake-a-Thon:** With autumn leaves falling, children can ask family members or caregivers for suggested donations to clear up the garden, yard or driveway. Challenge pupils to clear as many of these spaces as possible. Make sure children have strong gloves and bags if they take up the Rake-a-Thon challenge.

**Torch-lit hikes:** get sponsored to brave the elements and hold a torch-lit hike or winter walk to raise money. Make sure you have plenty of adults to supervise and assist when organising outdoor events with children. Better still, get the whole family involved!

**Winter disco:** why not donate the proceeds from your school disco to Mission Together this year? Or if that's not possible, hold a sweetie stall or prize stall at the event to raise money for children around the world.

**Christmas crafts:** get the whole school involved in making and selling ornaments, wreaths, biscuits, and any other Christmassy gifts and treats you can think of. Donate the proceeds to Mission Together

**Helping angels:** encourage children to take on extra chores at home, for a donation to Mission Together or contribution to the Red Box.

**Manger on a Mission:** This is a great way to remind people of the true meaning of Christmas and a novel way to raise funds. Ask pupils to dress as characters from the nativity (remember that the scriptures don't mention just how many shepherds and magi were present). Aim to create a complete crib set. Then take your manger on a mission tour around your school grounds, town or city. Remember to take a Mission Together Red Box to collect donations on the way.

**N.B. To add a prayerful focus to this fundraising task, download our interactive Christmas Crib Liturgy & Blessing.**