

# Mission Together

## Advent Liturgical Prayer: Week Three



**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.

### Setting the scene

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

### GATHER: Opening hymn or recorded music

Suggested hymn: *We are Waiting* by Claud Fulwood.  
[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): Isaiah 35:4-6 adapted for children.

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

A Gift for the World (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.

23 Eccleston Square London SW1V 1NU 020 7821 9755 [missiontogether.org.uk](http://missiontogether.org.uk)

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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 third Advent candle,  
Help us to wait patiently 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 third 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 hope as we wait for the birth of our Saviour, Jesus.

**Reader:** The third Sunday of Advent is called *Joyful Sunday*, because as Christmas Day draws closer, we are reminded of the joy that the birth of Jesus brings to the world.

**Reader:** Joy is something we feel deep in our hearts. It is a feeling we get when we know we are loved and cared for. We can feel joy even when life is difficult.

**Reader:** In today's reading, the prophet Isaiah looks forward to the lasting joy God's saviour will bring. Listen carefully to what Isaiah says to the people around him; people who were being treated unfairly by cruel leaders and who were struggling to cope.

### Bible reading: From the prophet Isaiah 35:4-6

**Reader:** Say to people who are afraid and confused,  
'Be strong. Don't be afraid.  
Look, your God will come and he will judge your enemies.  
He will make them pay for the wrongs they did.  
He will come and save you.'  
Then blind people will see again.  
Then the deaf people will hear.  
Those who can't walk will jump like deer.  
And those who can't speak now will shout with joy.  
Springs of water will flow in the desert.  
Streams will flow in the dry land.  
The people the Lord has freed will return to Jerusalem.  
Their happiness will last forever.  
Their gladness and joy will fill them completely.  
  
The Word of the Lord. **R/ Thanks be to God.**

### Mission Together

#### We hear God's Word

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

Say to people who are afraid and confused,  
"Be strong. Don't be afraid. Look, your God will come and he will judge your enemies. He will make them pay for the wrongs they did. He will come and save you."  
Then the blind people will see again. Then the deaf will hear. Crippled people will jump like deer. And those who can't talk now will shout with joy. Springs of water will flow in the desert. Streams will flow in the dry land. The people the Lord has freed will return to Jerusalem. Their happiness will last forever. Their gladness and joy will fill them completely.

The Word of the Lord  
R/ Thanks be to God



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

The reading we've just heard by the prophet Isaiah was written for people whose lives were very difficult. These people, the Israelites, had been driven from their homeland by a mean ruler and forced to live in a country they did not know. There the Israelites were treated as slaves. They were forced to work for cruel leaders and unable to leave. It was a shocking and scary time for the people.

Isaiah's words gave the people a reason to stay hopeful. Isaiah reminded the people that God had not forgotten them. God was sending a saviour to put right the wrongs that had been committed against the people. God loved the people and wanted them to feel joyful again, to feel joyful forever!

As we heard in our introduction, joy is a feeling we get when we know we are loved and cared for, and when we love and care for others. That's why we can feel joy even when life is difficult. This joyful feeling, of being loved and loving others, is much greater than the happiness we feel when we get something like a new toy. Happy feelings usually last for a short while, but the feeling of joy stays with us much longer.

Let's think about this a bit more. I'm going to present you with some choices and I'd like you to think in your head, not out loud, about which brings brief happiness and which brings lasting joy.

- Getting a new toy.
- Playing with your friends.
- Winning a trophy.
- Playing as a team.
- Receiving gifts at Christmas.
- Spending Christmas with people who love you, and whom you love.



The happiness we feel when we open our Christmas gifts is a wonderful thing, but often this happiness doesn't often last very long.

It's not like the feeling of joy which stays with us much longer. There are three things we can do to help the feeling of joy stay with us all the time. The first thing is to **be thankful** for all the gifts we receive. Not just the toys; but also the food we eat, the home we live in, our family and friends.

The second thing is to **share** the love of God and the Good News of Jesus. Some ways we can do this are by being generous with what we have, caring for all God's children, and looking after the world God has given to us.

The third way we can feel joy in our hearts all the time is through **prayer**. Prayer helps us to stay close to God and His Son, Jesus. By staying close we remember that we are loved by them, and that we love God and Jesus too. Prayer is also a way we show love for others, as we remember their needs and ask God to help us help them. Let's do that now through our **prayers of intercession**.



## Prayers of Intercession

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

**Reader:** Heavenly Father, in Advent and at Christmas we learn what it means to be joyful and thankful. Help us to always appreciate your love for us, the love of our families and friends, our home, the food we eat, the world we live in, and so much more. Lord, in your mercy...

**Reader:** Heavenly Father, in Advent and at Christmas we learn what it means to be joyful and generous. Help us to share what we have with others; our toys, our time, our faith, our friendship, so that nobody feels left out, unloved, or in need. Lord, in your mercy...

**Reader:** Heavenly Father, in Advent and at Christmas we learn what it means to be joyful and faithful. Help us to share the Good News of Jesus' birth with our family and friends, through our words, our actions, and our prayers. Lord, in your mercy...

**Reader:** Heavenly Father, in Advent and at Christmas we learn what it means to be joyful and to belong to your global family. Help us and all your children around the world, especially those who live in poverty and difficulty, to celebrate joyfully the birth of our saviour, Jesus. 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, in Advent and at Christmas we learn what it means to be joyful and thankful. Help us to always appreciate your love for us, the love of our families and friends, our home, the food we eat, the world we live in, and so much more. Lord, in your mercy. **R/ Hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, in Advent and at Christmas we learn what it means to be joyful and generous. Help us to share what we have with others; our toys, our time, our faith, our friendship, so that nobody feels left out, unloved, or in need. Lord, in your mercy. **R/ Hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, in Advent and at Christmas we learn what it means to be joyful and faithful. Help us to share the Good News of His birth with our family and friends, through our words, our actions, and our prayers. Lord, in your mercy. **R/ Hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, in Advent and at Christmas we learn what it means to be joyful and to belong to your global family. Help us and all your children around the world, especially those who live in poverty and difficulty, to celebrate joyfully the birth of our saviour, Jesus. Lord, in your mercy. **R/ Hear our prayer.**

Let us now say the Mission Together prayer.



**Mission Together**

**We are sent**

**M**ay all children  
**I**n the world  
**S**hare love  
**S**hare friendship and live  
**I**n the peace  
**O**f God's love,  
**N**ow and forever.  
Amen.



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**Sign of the cross**

**Closing hymn or recorded music.**

# 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.**