Children's Liturgy of the Word – First Sunday of Advent, Year B, 29th November

Readings: Isaiah 63:16b–17; 64:1, 3b–8 • 1 Corinthians 1:3–9 • Mark 13:33–37

Theme: Stay Awake for Jesus

Main Message: Advent teaches us to be ready for Jesus. He came at Bethlehem, He comes close to us now, and one day He will come again in glory.

1. Welcome & Gathering

Gather the children warmly.

Ask:

"Have you ever waited for someone special to arrive?"

Perhaps:

Grandparents.

A friend.

Someone coming for Christmas.

Ask:

"What do you do when you know they are coming?"

You get ready.

Say:

"Today Jesus tells us:

Stay awake. Be ready.

Not because something frightening is coming.

Because **He** is coming."

Make the Sign of the Cross together.

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus,
thank You for coming to us.

Help us during Advent
to listen to You,

to pray,
to choose what is good
and to keep our hearts ready for You.

Amen.

2. Gospel – Simplified

Leader:

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Mark.

Children:
Glory to You, O Lord.

Jesus said to His disciples:

“Be careful.

Stay awake.

You do not know when the master of the house will return.

It is like a man who goes away on a journey.

Before he leaves, he gives each servant a job to do.

Then he says to the doorkeeper:

‘Stay awake.’

So you must stay awake too.

Do not let the master return and find you asleep.

What I say to you, I say to everyone:

Stay awake.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Children:
Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

3. Short Homily

Ask:

“Does Jesus mean we must never go to bed?”

Children:
No!

Say:

“Jesus means:

Do not forget Me.

Sometimes we can be awake on the outside but asleep on the inside.

We can be very busy.

School.

Games.

Television.

Christmas shopping.

Decorations.

Parties.

And somehow forget Jesus.”

Ask:

“What is Advent really preparing us for?”

Christmas.

Say:

“Yes — but Advent is bigger than simply counting down to Christmas.

The Church teaches us three things.

Jesus came.

He came as a baby at Bethlehem.

Jesus comes to us now.

He comes to us in prayer.

In His Word.

Through His grace.

And especially at Mass.

And one day:

Jesus will come again in glory.”

Say together:

“Jesus came.
Jesus comes.
Jesus will come again.”

4. Isaiah – “Come Down!”

Say:

“In the first reading, Isaiah prays:

‘O that You would tear the heavens open and come down!’

Isaiah really wanted God to come close.

And God answered in the most amazing way.

Jesus came.

Not as a great army.

Not in a huge palace.

As a baby.”

Ask:

“Where was Jesus born?”

Bethlehem.

Say:

“God came very quietly.

That teaches us something.

Sometimes God works in small, quiet ways.

A prayer.

A kind word.

Someone forgiving.

A child saying sorry.

A quiet Mass.

God does not have to make lots of noise to be close.”

5. The Potter and the Clay

Say:

“Isaiah also says:

‘We are the clay, and You are the potter.’

What does a potter do?”

He shapes clay.

Say:

“God wants to shape our hearts too.

Not into cups or bowls!

Into people who are:

Kind.

Truthful.

Patient.

Prayerful.

Loving.

Holy.”

Small Action

Ask the children to pretend they are holding a lump of clay.

Say:

“Imagine God shaping your heart.”

Then say:

“Jesus, make me kind.”

Children pretend to shape.

“Jesus, make me truthful.”

“Jesus, make me forgiving.”

“Jesus, make me holy.”

Finish together:

“Jesus, shape my heart.”

6. Saint Paul – God Gives Us What We Need

Say:

"Saint Paul tells the Christians something very encouraging.

He says:

'You are not lacking in any gift.'

God gives us what we need to follow Him."

Ask:

"What has God given us?"

Possible answers:

Our faith.

The Bible.

Prayer.

The Church.

The Sacraments.

Our families.

People who help us.

Say:

"So Advent is not about sitting around doing nothing and waiting.

Jesus gives us grace.

And then He asks us to use it."

7. Stay Awake!

Say:

"I am going to give you some examples.

If it sounds like being awake for Jesus, say:

'Awake!'

If it sounds like forgetting Him, say:

'Asleep!'"

Praying.

Awake!

Being deliberately cruel.

Asleep!

Saying sorry.

Awake!

Refusing to forgive.

Asleep!

Coming to Mass and listening to Jesus.

Awake!

Helping someone who is lonely.

Awake!

Finish:

“Jesus, help me stay awake for You.”

8. Advent Is About Jesus

Say:

“At Advent there are lots of good things.

Lights.

Cards.

Food.

Presents.

Christmas trees.

But none of those things is the centre.

Who is the centre?”

Children:
Jesus!

Say:

“If we have everything ready for Christmas except our hearts, we have missed the most important part.

So during Advent we can prepare our hearts by:

Praying.

Being kind.

Saying sorry.

Forgiving.

Coming to Mass.

Helping someone.

Thinking about Jesus.”

9. Profession of Faith

Leader:

“Let us tell God what we believe.”

Do you believe in God the Father, who made us and loves us?

Children:
Yes, I believe.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, who came at Bethlehem, died and rose again, and will come again in glory?

Children:
Yes, I believe.

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who helps us stay close to Jesus?

Children:
Yes, I believe.

10. Intercessions

Leader:

“As we begin Advent, let us ask God to help us prepare our hearts.”

For the Church, that she may help people everywhere prepare for the coming of Jesus.
Lord, hear us.

For our families, that our homes may be filled with prayer, kindness and peace during Advent.
Lord, hear us.

For people who are lonely, sick or worried, that they may know Jesus is close to them.
Lord, hear us.

For ourselves, that we may stay awake to Jesus and choose what is good.
Lord, hear us.

For those who have died, that Jesus may welcome them into the joy of Heaven.
Lord, hear us.

Let us ask Our Lady, who waited for Jesus with faith, to pray with us.

Hail Mary…

11. Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus,
come into our hearts this Advent.

Help us to stay awake,
to listen to You
and to choose what is good.

Shape our hearts
and make us ready for You.

Amen.

12. Activity Suggestions

Option A – Awake or Asleep?

Repeat the earlier game with new examples.

Telling the truth.

Awake!

Ignoring someone who needs help.

Asleep!

Praying before bed.

Awake!

Remembering Jesus at Christmas.

Awake!

Option B – Advent Heart

Draw a large heart.

Inside write or draw:

PRAY

FORGIVE

HELP

SHARE

LISTEN TO JESUS

Write underneath:

GET MY HEART READY FOR JESUS

Option C – Three Comings

Leader:

Who came at Bethlehem?

Jesus!

Who comes close to us now?

Jesus!

Who will come again in glory?

Jesus!

Repeat:

Jesus came.
Jesus comes.
Jesus will come again.

Memory Line

For younger children:

"Jesus, help me stay awake."

For older children:

"Stay awake, for you do not know when the master of the house will come."

Final line together:

"Come, Lord Jesus."