Prayer for the Season of Advent

Read and Pray: Choose only one of the Christmas infancy narratives and know the difference between the two. Luke’s Gospel has the Holy Family travelling to Bethlehem, participating in the census, visited by the shepherds, and then returning home to Nazareth. Matthew’s Gospel has the Holy Family already living in Bethlehem, Mary giving birth, Christ Child visited by the Wise Men, the slaughter of the infants, Holy Family fleeing to Egypt, then resettling in Nazareth.

Pray while walking a labyrinth: either outside or within a spare room with candles. Place Images and pieces of artwork retelling the story of the birth of Christ for participants to read, reflect and pray as they walk, journeying through the labyrinth. Alternatively, pray using hand held labyrinth cards or pottery labyrinths as the focus is on journey.

Pray while creating a Mandala: Create a class, staff and/or whole school rice mandala, the prayer focus: celebrating the waiting period of Advent.

Pray through Lectio Divina: Participate in Lectio Divina: sharing one of the scripture passages from one of the Infancy Narratives.

Placemat Prayer: Create a placemat prayer on the theme of journey, waiting, preparing in anticipation.

Prayer Journal or Advent Calendar: Have the students keep a Prayer Journal each day. Explore themes of waiting, yielding to God, surrender. Similarly, the use of a prayer reflective Advent Calendar: www.caritas.org.au/advent

Retreat: Organise a student or staff retreat on the theme of Journey. Focus on Matthew’s Gospel and the Journey of the Wise Men. The Wise Men began a journey, when they visited the infant child, they were changed, they went home by another route. How often do we begin a journey on one path, thinking we know the map, the way home, the way we are going in life, and then to have that changed, to then continue the journey on another path.
Mantra: Explore with older students the concept of “Let it Be” – “Let it be to me according to your word” (Luke 1:38: "I am the Lord’s servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said.") The words Mary spoke to the angel when he announced to her that she would give birth to God’s son. With them she let go of her own will and the security of her old way of life and yielded to the purposes of God. Ask the students to reflect upon this yielding and trust of “let it be” to God.

Meditative Prayer: Explore the theme of Waiting: being still, in the moment, yielding to God through stillness, silence and meditation.

Advent Prayer while lighting Advent Candle
God of Hope,
As light comes to us from this Advent candle,
May the blessing of your Son, Jesus, be with us;
Warming our hearts and brightening our way.
During this Advent Season this candle is a beacon of Hope as we prepare for the coming light of Christ, who brings forgiveness and healing to our world,
Amen.

Pray using the Advent Wreath:
The candles of the Advent Wreath:
The first candle represents the Old Testament prophets who foretold Christ's coming.
The second candle represents John the Baptist, who pointed to Jesus as the ‘Lamb of God.’
The third is for Mary who prepared herself and presented Jesus to the world.
The fourth candle represents us, who are now called to prepare ourselves to be prophets and witnesses.