

# The Gospel at Home

## This Week's Gospel: Matthew 24:37-44

The Church's three-year cycle of Lectionary readings begins again on the first Sunday of Advent. We start reading from Year A, which is organized around Matthew's Gospel. The prophet Isaiah's words are used prominently in Advent. They are read as the First Reading each week and are quoted by Matthew in the Gospels. We begin the new Church year by hearing Jesus speak of his coming in glory. He cautions us always to be ready for him and to live each day in the light of God.

### Exploring the Gospel Message

**Seeds (Preschool):** Your child's lesson this week features an Advent wreath on the cover. Over the next four weeks, there will be a flame to cut out and paste on the wreath candles. This wreath should be displayed where your child can see and reach it in order to paste a new flame each Sunday after Mass. Talk with your child about how you celebrate his or her birthday and relate that to preparing for the birthday of Jesus.

**Promise (Grades K–1):** Your child made a simple Advent calendar in class this week. Display the calendar and open one panel each Sunday leading up to Christmas. The class learned different ways to prepare for Christmas. Ask your child to share some of these ways. Help your child choose one or two things to do for Advent. Using the pictures as a guide, request that your child tell you the story, "The Video Game Problem." Discuss what choices Frank could have made so he could have spent time with his family.

**Good News (Grades 2–3):** In class this week, your child reviewed the Ten Commandments. Talk with him or her about how to live the Commandments. The class also performed a play to learn about the prophet Isaiah. The

words of Isaiah are used during Advent and Christmas. Ask your child to tell you how Isaiah spoke for God. Talk about ways your family can be ready for the coming of Jesus at Christmas.

**Venture (Grades 4–6):** At the beginning of this new Church year, look together at the liturgical year calendar in your child's lesson booklet. Talk about the importance of following the life of Jesus throughout the year. Your child also learned about the prophet Isaiah. Have your child share Isaiah's vision with the family and discuss why peace is a necessary goal for everyone. In preparing for Christmas, plan things to do as a family. Use the Week 1 Calendar List in the lesson booklet to give you ideas for this coming week.

**Visions (Grades 7–9):** In class this week, the young people considered how they could make Jesus' birth meaningful during this Advent. As a family, brainstorm activities that will help prepare your family's hearts and home for Christmas. Make sure what you choose to do is realistic. Your youngster can share some of the ideas discussed in class. Use a large format calendar to record the activities your family completes together.

### Pray Together

Plan to have a family Advent wreath. The wreath traditionally has — three purple candles and one pink, but four, all-white candles will do. During the first week of Advent, light one candle each evening. During the second week, light two; during the third week, light three. If you have colored candles, the third week is for the pink candle. All four candles will be lit during the fourth week. Say a prayer that shows how you are excited for Jesus' coming. It can be as simple as: "Come, Lord Jesus, come."