

Advent Reflections



Leaders guidance

Thank you for considering facilitating an Advent reflection group in your parish. This resource invites parish participants to journey through the Advent time of preparation and anticipation, in solidarity with our sisters and brothers around the world.

Each week we will focus on one of four Advent themes – hope, love, joy and peace – and reflect on one of the Sunday readings.

Getting ready

Identify a suitable space and time and advertise your gathering. One of the best ways of promoting the Advent reflections will be through personal contact and invitation. You could also advertise on social media, perhaps by setting up an event page, and in Church newsletters.

If possible, ask in advance if you want anyone to read the scripture passages or prayers, so that they can prepare.

On the day

This is not intended to be a prescriptive list but rather some suggestions. You will know your community best!

- Set up chairs in a circle so that everyone feels equally involved.
- Greet participants as they enter. Tea, coffee and biscuits on arrival are always appreciated and encourage people to chat informally.
- Ask individuals to introduce themselves to the group by saying their name. If people do not know each other well, you might invite them to share a little more as an 'icebreaker' such as what has brought them to the group or their favourite Advent/Christmas tradition.
- If you have a large group (more than 12) consider forming small groups to allow individuals more time to speak. If you do form small groups, you may like to gather everyone and let groups report briefly on their conversations.

- Encourage people to participate by acknowledging and valuing all contributions. Invite, but don't pressure, quieter individuals to share.
- Introduce CAFOD as the international aid and development organisation of the Catholic Church in England and Wales. If possible, you may wish to show a short film explaining our work, such as <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7a0tOXUwkao&t=215s>