

2003 ADVENT RESOURCE SUPPLEMENT

This extension of the resource, *Advent 2003: Celebrate Christ's Coming to Establish Peace on Earth*, offers various ways to use the resource during and after the Advent season.

? Form an Advent study group.

- ✍ Use the prepared text exactly as presented to facilitate use in a small group, classroom, family setting, or at home. It would be helpful to designate a facilitator or discussion leader and to have a bible handy. Meaningful sessions can be completed in an hour or less.
- ✍ Read and reflect on the full text of Pope John XXIII's encyclical, *Peace on Earth (Pacem in Terris)* and/or Pope John Paul II's 2003 World Day of Peace Message. Use the context of poverty in the U.S. for discussion and action.
- ✍ With Youth groups, design an Advent collage of pictures, words, and/or local news stories that conveys a stream of Catholic social thought in the text e.g., human rights and responsibilities, conditions essential for peace, or poverty in the U.S. as a challenge to peace.
- ✍ Localize the weekly reflection by substituting the story of an area CCHD-funded group or other local story of empowerment as the basis for prayer and reflection. Select a story that reflects well known local concern(s). In lieu of reading a success story, invite members of a CCHD-funded group to tell their own success story and share what they know about the issue. Consult with the local diocesan director for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development for assistance.
- ✍ In parish religious education programs and Catholic schools, use the text as background for developing a skit that relates how long-term solutions to poverty in the U.S. support lasting peace.

? Add variety to regular meetings in Advent or at other times.

- ✍ Selectively incorporate portions of the guide in parish, school and other settings where one would open a meeting or session with prayer, reflection and/or discussion.
- ✍ With your social justice committee, classmates or other group develop an action plan for peace that is built on one or more of the four pillars mentioned in the text.

? Create a prayer service.

- ✍ Mark each candle with the respective pillar of peace – Truth, Justice, Love (pink), and Freedom.
- ✍ Create a peaceful environment for prayer at home, in the classroom or parish meeting place. Adorn the prayer area with signs of peace. Modify the environment for prayer each week to coincide with the theme of the reflection, i.e., Truth, Justice, Love, Freedom.
- ✍ Use one of these blessings for Advent wreaths or create your own. Reference: *Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers*, USCCB
- ✍ For Youth groups, write intercessory prayers that are inspired by the four pillars of peace. Discuss these prayerful needs together.
- ✍ In Youth and Young Adult groups, find contemporary music that reflects one or more of these essential conditions of the human heart. Compare and contrast secular or generalized notions of freedom and love, for example, with their usage in the encyclical and papal message. Use the music to relate these virtues to God's vision of peace.
- ✍ Use a local or national news story to illustrate or discuss the relationship between peace and poverty in the U.S. Explore the implications for those who are not living in poverty. Consider the needs of immigrants in the U.S. vis-à-vis poverty, peace and justice. Look at the issues that your community faces from the viewpoints of immigrants and non-immigrants.

1. Prayer for Blessing of the Advent Wreath* (all occasions)

Lord God,

Let your blessing come upon us as we light the candles of this wreath.

May the wreath and its light be a sign of Christ's promise to bring us salvation.

May he come quickly and not delay.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

2. Advent Wreath Blessing* (in public settings)

Leader: Let us pray for God's blessing upon us and upon this wreath.

All: Lord our God,
we praise you for your Son, Jesus Christ:
he is Emmanuel, the hope of the peoples,
he is the wisdom that teaches us and guides us,
he is the Savior of every nation.

Lord God,
let your blessing come upon us
as we light the candles of this wreath.
May the wreath and its light be a sign of
Christ's promise to bring us salvation.
May he come quickly and not delay.

Leader: We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

3. Blessing the Advent Wreath* (at meal time)

Leader: Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation:
in the darkness and in the light.

Side A: Blessed are you in this food and in our sharing.

Side B: Blessed are you as we wait in joyful hope
for the coming of our savior, Jesus Christ.

All: For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever.

Leader: Come, Lord Jesus!

All: Come quickly! Amen.

? Use this Advent Calendar with the printed resource or develop another.

Nov 30—Advent Begins: Start using this resource, follow Week 1

Dec 1 – Pledge to be involved in ending U.S. poverty, go to www.usccb.org/cchd/

Dec 2 – Read the U.S. Bishops' statement, *A Place at the Table* (www.usccb.org/sdwp)
Or call 800-235-8722

Dec 3 – Decide what gift you or your family will give to the poor this Christmas

Dec 4 – Ride a bike or walk and think of one action you can do to help end poverty in the USA

Dec 5 – Get involved with a project of your parish or campus social concerns group during Advent

Dec 6 – Read about St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, patroness of Immigrants, whose compassion for poor children helped create many schools, hospitals and orphanages

Dec 7 – Continue using this resource, follow Week 2

Dec 8 – Feast of the Immaculate Conception: Attend Mass and pray for victims of abortion

Dec 9 – Write to elected officials to advocate for just policies for low-income workers and families

Dec 10 – Find out about poverty in your state, visit www.povertyusa.org and www.usccb.org/cchd

Dec 11 – Share with a priest your desire to hear more about Catholic Social Teaching in homilies

Dec 12 – Honor Our Lady of Guadalupe and the Church's "welcoming" tradition – See www.usccb.org/mrs

Dec 13 – Give one hour's wages to a CCHD funded project

Dec 14 – Continue using this resource, follow Week 3

Dec 15 – Pray the rosary for world peace

Dec 16 – Buy a CCHD faith-sharing resource gift, *Solidarity with the Poor*; call 800-235-8722

Dec 17 – Find out how parishes can support neighbors in need (www.catholiccharitiesusa.org)

Dec 18 – Reflect on workers' rights and the 13th Amendment that abolished slavery in the U.S.

Dec 19 –As the Jewish celebration of Hanukkah begins pray for peace, justice and cooperation among Christians, Jews and Moslems in the U.S. and around the world

Dec 20 – Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation; ask God's forgiveness for sin in our society

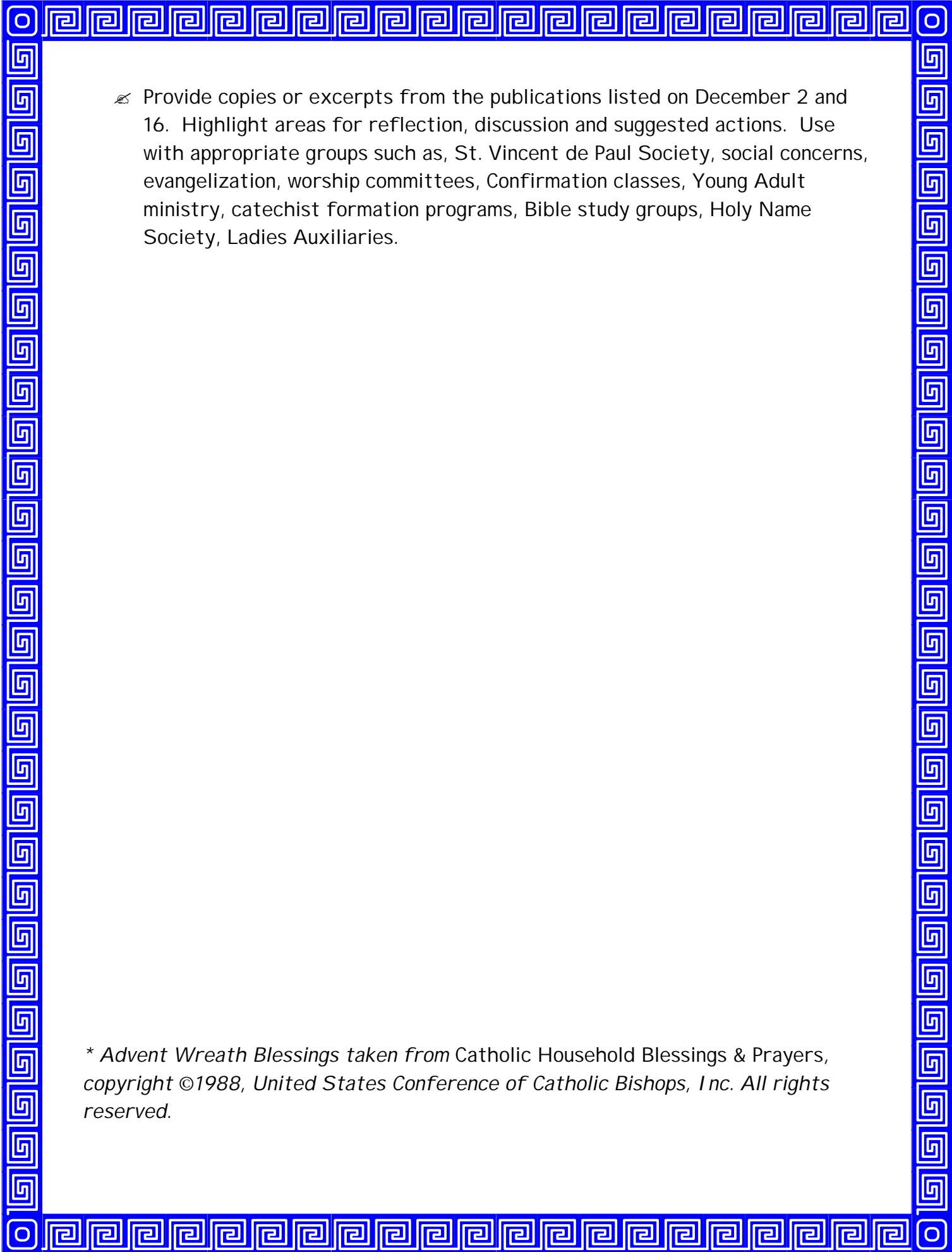
Dec 21 – Continue using this resource, follow Week 4

Dec 22 – Suggest to children with whom you are acquainted to visit www.catholicrelief.org/kids

Dec 23 – Enjoy music of the season and reflect on the true meaning of God's peace

Dec 24 – Ask the Prince of Peace to show you how to better honor others' rights and duties

- ✍ Share the Websites identified on December 1, 2, 10, 12, 17 and 22, by publishing them in parish bulletins and newsletters and e-mailing the links to friends or colleagues.
- ✍ Learn from the Lives of Saints mentioned on December 6, 8 and 12, by finding out how they embodied principles of Catholic social teaching, particularly how their lives and spiritual contributions relate to peace and to people living in poverty in the U.S. To learn more about the lives of saints who were committed to social ministry go to www.usccb.org/cchd/youth.htm and www.catholic.org/saints.



✍ Provide copies or excerpts from the publications listed on December 2 and 16. Highlight areas for reflection, discussion and suggested actions. Use with appropriate groups such as, St. Vincent de Paul Society, social concerns, evangelization, worship committees, Confirmation classes, Young Adult ministry, catechist formation programs, Bible study groups, Holy Name Society, Ladies Auxiliaries.

** Advent Wreath Blessings taken from Catholic Household Blessings & Prayers, copyright ©1988, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Inc. All rights reserved.*