



A Catholic Campaign Against Global Poverty:



Trade • Aid • Debt

Advent Opening Prayer for Small Groups: Week 1

Note: The following prayer service can also be done without the lighting of the Advent Wreath depending on the needs of the local group.

Leader: For unto us a child is born...
Isaiah 9:6

Let us prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus by remembering all of the children who are born to us somewhere in the world every day who suffer from poverty and hunger, who are our brothers and sisters, who are the least among us, whom Jesus taught us to love.

Sing first verse and chorus of “Oh Come Oh Come Emmanuel”, or sing “Come Lord Jesus”

As the first purple candle is lit, the reader reads:

To have hope
Is to believe that history continues open
To the plan of God and to human creativity.

Leader: Emmanuel, we wait in joyful hope to celebrate your presence among us. Throughout this week, which includes World AIDS Day, we pray especially for the 40 million people who are living with AIDS throughout the world, mainly in developing countries. And we recall also the 15 million children in the world who have lost one or both parents to AIDS. We know that you are with them and that you call us to join you in caring for them.

All: Help us to be a light of hope in the darkness. Help us to stand with those who live in poverty and with disease, to lift their voices and to proclaim their dignity. Amen.

Written by Barbara Ballenger

Adapted from “To Have Hope” written by the Missionary Sisters of St. Charles Borromeo. Excerpted from *Prayer Without Borders, Celebrating Global Wisdom*, © Catholic Relief Services, 2004



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Advent Opening Prayer for Small Groups: Week 2

Note: The following prayer service can also be done without the lighting of the Advent Wreath depending on the needs of the local group.

Leader: For unto us a child is born... Isaiah 9:6

Let us prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus by remembering all of the children who are born to us somewhere in the world every day who suffer from poverty and hunger, who are our brothers and sisters, who are the least among us, whom Jesus taught us to love.

Sing first verse and chorus of “Oh Come Oh Come Emmanuel”, or sing “Come Lord Jesus”

As the first purple candle is lit, the reader reads:

To have hope
Is to believe that history continues open
To the plan of God and to human creativity.

As the second purple candle is lit, the reader reads:

To have hope
Is to continue affirming
That it is possible to dream a different world,
Without hunger, without injustice,
Without discrimination.

Leader: Emmanuel, we wait in joyful hope to celebrate your presence among us. This week many children will celebrate St. Nicholas Day, putting out shoes that will be filled with candy by loving adults. But we know that in the developing world, more than a quarter of the children are malnourished. For them there is barely a meal a day, not a celebration that includes treats and toys. Many don't even have shoes, and the adults in their lives struggle to provide a decent future for them.

We know, Emmanuel, that you are with them, and that you call us to join you in caring for them.

All: Help us to be a light of hope in the darkness. Help us to stand with those who live in poverty, to lift their voices and to proclaim their dignity. Amen.

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Advent Opening Prayer for Small Groups: Week 3

Note: The following prayer service can also be done without the lighting of the Advent Wreath depending on the needs of the local group.

Leader: For unto us a child is born...
Isaiah 9:6

Let us prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus by remembering all of the children who are born to us somewhere in the world every day who suffer from poverty and hunger, who are our brothers and sisters, who are the least among us, whom Jesus taught us to love.

Sing first verse and chorus of “Oh Come Oh Come Emmanuel”, or sing “Come Lord Jesus”

As the first purple candle is lit, the reader reads:

To have hope
Is to believe that history continues open
To the plan of God and to human creativity.

As the second purple candle is lit, the reader reads:

To have hope
Is to continue affirming
That it is possible to dream a different world,
Without hunger, without injustice,
Without discrimination.

As the pink candle is lit, the reader reads:

To have hope
Is to be a courier of God
And a courier of men and women of good will,
Tearing down walls, destroying borders,
Building bridges.

Leader: Emmanuel, we wait in joyful hope to celebrate your presence among us. This week Catholics in Mexico and throughout Latin America will celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. They will remember the story of how she appeared in what is now Mexico City to a poor peasant, Juan Diego, and asked him to bear her message and her miracles to the bishop and ultimately to the world. Today migrants who have left their homes to look for good jobs and futures for their families light candles and write prayers asking Our Lady of Guadalupe for help as

they seek opportunity, safety, and freedom. Many keep her in their hearts throughout the dangerous desert crossing into the United States, a trek that last year alone claimed nearly 450 lives.

We know, Emmanuel, that you are with them, and that you call us to join you in caring for them.

All: Help us to be a light of hope in the darkness. Help us to stand with those who live in poverty, to lift their voices and to proclaim their dignity. Amen.

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Advent Opening Prayer for Small Groups: Week 4

Note: The following prayer service can also be done without the lighting of the Advent Wreath depending on the needs of the local group.

Leader: For unto us a child is born...

Isaiah 9:6

Let us prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus by remembering all of the children who are born to us somewhere in the world every day who suffer from poverty and hunger, who are our brothers and sisters, who are the least among us, whom Jesus taught us to love.

Sing first verse and chorus of “Oh Come Oh Come Emmanuel”, or sing “Come Lord Jesus”

As the first purple candle is lit, the reader reads:

To have hope
Is to believe that history continues open
To the plan of God and to human creativity.

As the second purple candle is lit, the reader reads:

To have hope
Is to continue affirming
That it is possible to dream a different world,
Without hunger, without injustice,
Without discrimination.

As the pink candle is lit, the reader reads:

To have hope
Is to be a courier of God
And a courier of men and women of good will,
Tearing down walls, destroying borders,
Building bridges.

As the fourth candle is lit, the reader reads:

To have hope
Is to believe in the revolutionary potential of faith,
Is to leave the door open so that
The Spirit can enter and make all things new.

Reader 1: To have hope is to believe that life wins over death.

Reader 2: To have hope is to begin again as many times as necessary.

Reader 3: To have hope is to believe that hope cannot die, that hope will not die.

Reader 4: To have hope is to believe that God's love will prevail.

All: To have hope is to live in God's love.

Leader: Emmanuel, we wait in joyful hope to celebrate your presence among us. In this season of anticipation, of Christmas parties and preparations, help us remember those who have lost so much. We remember the victims of the hurricanes in our own country, and those who will not be able to afford fuel this winter. We remember the victims of disasters overseas: of hurricanes in Latin America, of earthquakes in Pakistan, India and Afghanistan, of famine in Western Africa, and armed conflict throughout the world.

We know, Emmanuel, that you are with them, and that you call us to join you in caring for them.

All: Help us to be a light of hope in the darkness. Help us to stand with those who live in poverty, to lift their voices and to proclaim their dignity. Amen.

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