



Diocese of Waterford & Lismore Liturgy Commission

Creating a Jesse Tree

The season of Advent emphasises hope. Advent is a time to step beyond our current realities and believe that God is coming to live among us, to be one of us. The season of Advent comes each year to challenge us to examine once again the story of a God who is with us in mysterious ways, bringing hope to a hurting world. If we study the work of our prophets, we can come to understand how God's people heard the words of a prophet in their day and time, and how they continued to derive new meaning in each new generation. They can remind us that God's words and actions are not stagnant, but live anew for each generation just as powerfully as when the prophet first spoke it.

Jesse Tree Tradition

A perfect way to involve children, and help them to understand the meaning of Advent is to create Jesse tree. The tradition of the Jesse Tree comes from Isaiah 11 : 1-9, where God promises the Israelites that a peaceful kingdom will come again ('A shoot will spring forth from the stump of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots'). A branch or small tree provides a good base, and ornaments or hangings representing many of the generations of God's people throughout the history of the bible are created and hung on the tree. If possible, enough ornaments or hangings are created so that they can be hung on the tree each week of Advent at the Sunday Mass. Biblical texts can be assigned to go along with each ornament.

A Jesse Tree is a powerful symbol to help tell the story of God and of God's people, and to connect the Advent season with the faithfulness of God and the hopefulness of God's people across history.

Symbols for ornaments

Please use the information below to create the ornaments for your own Jesse Tree. Think about different ways children can make the symbols (colouring, glitter, gluing, craft sticks, etc).

<i>Date</i>	<i>Biblical Character</i>	<i>Biblical Text</i>	<i>Symbol</i>
Week 1	God	Genesis 1 : 11-12	The tree or branch that will hold the ornaments
	Adam & Eve	Genesis 1 : 26-27	Apple
	Noah	Genesis 7:1, 9:1	Ark
	Abraham & Sarah	Genesis 18: 1-2, 9-12	
	Isaac & Rebekah	Genesis 23 : 61-67	Camel
	Jacob	Genesis 28 : 1-2, 10-15	Ladder
Week 2	Joseph	Genesis 37: 1-3	Coat
	Moses	Exodus 2 : 1-10	Baby Moses
	Miriam	Exodus 15 : 20-22a	Tambourine
	Joshua	Joshua 1 : 1-2, 6:, 3-5	Ram's Horn
	Rahab	Joshua 2 : 3-15	Rope
	Deborah	Judges 4 : 4-5	Palm Tree
	Ruth	Ruth 1 : 15-19, 2 : 1-2	Wheat
Week 3	Samuel	1 Samuel 3 : 1-10	Oil Lamp
	Jesse	1 Samuel 16 : 1 Isaiah 11 : 1-3	Branch
	David	1 Samuel 16 : 11-13	Sheep
	Jonah	Jonah 1: 17-2 : 10	Whale
	Isaiah	Isaiah 11 : 6-10	Lion & Lamb
	Micah	Micah 1 : 1, 6:8	Footprint
	Jeremiah	Jeremiah 27 : 1-7 : Psalm	Harp
Week 4	Esther	Esther 5 : 1-3, 7 : 3-4	Sceptre
	Nehemiah	Nehemiah 2 : 17-18	Stone Wall
	Zechariah	Luke 1 : 5-23, 59-63	Pen & Tablet
	Elizabeth	Luke 1 : 24-25, 39-45	Baby
	Mary	Luke 1 : 26-28	Angel
	Joseph	Matthew 1 : 18-21	Hammer
	Jesus	Luke 2 : 1-7	Manger