

BE ON THE WATCH

VISUAL AIDS

- > Advent wreath, or four candles.
- > Christmas tree with fairy lights.
- > Mobile of sun, moon and stars.
- > Either cut-out star shapes, or clock faces.

WELCOME AND PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL

*Light the first Advent candle,
switch on the tree lights;
say/sing together:*

Alleluia, alleluia!
We long for your coming,
Lord Jesus.
Alleluia!

A reading from the Good News given to us by Matthew, Mark and Luke.

Glory to you, Lord.

Jesus says,
'You will see signs, the golden sun and the silver moon and stars shining in the night sky. Let these remind you that I am coming. Be on the watch. When the great flood came, many people were taken

DISCUSSION

What signs did Jesus say should remind us that he is coming?

- sun, moon, stars.

What signs around us remind us that Christmas is near?

- decorations, trees, cards, etc.

How can we be signs to remind people of Jesus?

- by sharing, telling the truth, praying, etc.

When would we not like Jesus to come back and see what we are doing?

- when we are being selfish, greedy, lazy, etc.

So how can we watch for Jesus and be ready to welcome him?

- by caring, sharing, praying, etc.

SHARING

Today a special time of the year begins, which is called 'Advent'. It is a time of waiting and preparing for the coming of Jesus. Encourage the children to say how they feel when waiting for something: for birthdays; for a new baby; etc. What kind of preparations do they make? Advent is also a time for remembering. Encourage the children to share their memories of

Christmas and gifts. During Advent we remember God's wonderful gifts to us. Have the children name some of the gifts given to us by God: life; parents; brothers; sisters; friends; etc. We remember especially the greatest gift of love that God gives us: Jesus, his only Son. During Advent we prepare to celebrate Christmas, to remember Jesus' being born. And we also remember his promise to come again.

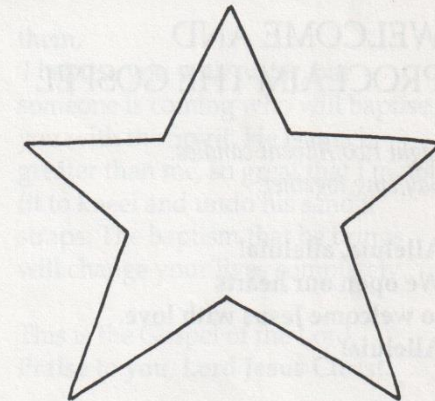
by surprise.

Be on the watch. Be like Noah and his family, who were ready.

Be like faithful servants waiting for their master to come home. Stay awake. Do not let him find you sleeping.

Be on the watch and ready to welcome him when he arrives.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



ACTIVITIES

> Have the children mime short scenes illustrating not being ready; being taken by surprise.

Either:

> Give out the star shapes.

> On them have the children write or draw how they can be 'Jesus signs' in the week ahead.

Or:

> Give out blank paper and ask the children to draw how they can be

a light for Jesus: e.g. a lighthouse, guiding and warning; lamp, helping people see; firelight, keeping people warm and cosy.

Or:

> Give out clock faces.

> Have the children divide them into four sections, and write how they will remember Jesus morning, afternoon, evening and bedtime.