



My Catholic Advent & Christmas

Dear Parents,

We have missed being in the classroom with your children in our Catholic Special Religious Education (SRE) lessons! One of the highlights of our time together is always at the end of the year when we get to pray and talk about the birth of Jesus at Christmas. We love the special privilege of giving the children the opportunity to explore the meaning of Advent and Christmas as an important religious time as well as a fun celebration with friends and family.

Though it can never replace the time we have missed together this year in SRE, we have prepared this booklet full of activities that you as a family can do together this Advent in the lead up to Christmas.

In this booklet you will find craft activities, baking activities, fun learn-from-home lessons, prayers and readings. We hope that these are activities that will inspire you to come together as a family and put "Christ" at the forefront of "Christmas."

We very much look forward to our lessons with your children when it is safe to resume teaching SRE in schools.
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Blessings,
Your Catechists (scripture teachers)



*A special message
from your teachers*



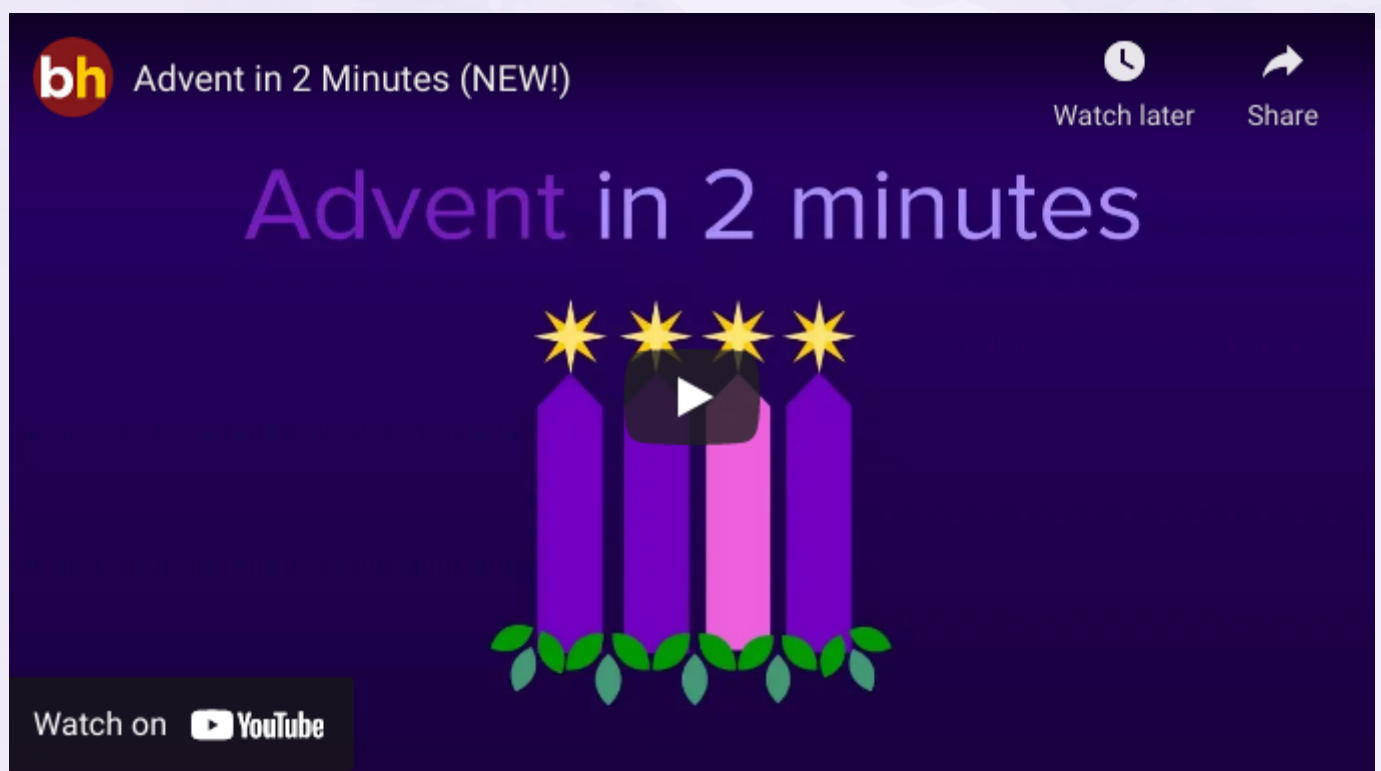
(Click image to play)

WHAT IS ADVENT?

Advent is a season in the Church's life intended to renew the experience of waiting, and longing, for the birth of Jesus. Though He has already come into the world, the Church invites us to renew our desire for the Lord more deeply into our lives, and to renew our desire for Christ's triumphant second coming into the world.

Advent is the time in which we prepare for Christmas, the memorial of Jesus Christ being born into the world. Preparations are practical, like decorating a tree or stringing lights, but they're also intended to be spiritual.

Watch this video for a quick overview of what Advent is all about.



Cool. So, it's like four weeks long?

Advent is a slightly different length each year. It starts four Sundays before Christmas. But because Christmas is on a fixed date, and could fall on different days of the week, Advent can be as short as three weeks and a day, or as long as four weeks.

And, Advent wreaths. Where do they come from?

The Catholic Church has been using advent wreaths since the Middle Ages. Lighting candles as we prepare for Christmas reminds us that Christ is the light of the world. And the evergreen boughs remind us of new and eternal life in Christ, the eternal son of the Father.

I like the Advent calendars that have chocolate in them. Do you know where they come from?

No. But I like them too. The chocolate is usually pretty waxy, but still. I think the idea is to build up anticipation by having only one little treat each day. But sometimes I eat them all in the first week. Oops.

Is it wrong to sing Christmas songs during Advent?

Wrong? No, not immoral or anything. But there are a lot of great Advent hymns and songs: "O Come O Come Emmanuel," "Come Thou Long Expected Jesus," "O Come Divine Messiah," "Come Thou Fount," "Hark! A Thrilling Voice is Sounding". Songs like Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer are super fun to sing, but why not try and add some Advent specific music to the time before Christmas comes to heighten the feeling of anticipation of the birth of Jesus.

When should we put up our tree?

Look, when to put up the tree is a decision that families should decide on their own, through time-honored holiday traditions like, say, arguing about when to put up the tree!

Some people put up their tree and decorate it on the first Sunday of Advent, to make a big transformation in their home and get them into "preparing for Christmas" mode. That seems cool.

Some families say especially that this year they "need a little Christmas." I totally get it. Go for it!

Some people put up the tree on the first Sunday of Advent, put on lights the next Sunday, ornaments the next, and decorate it more and more as they get closer to Christmas. Awesome!



Make Your Own Advent Wreath

DOWNLOAD THE TEMPLATE AND GET CREATING!

**(CLICK HERE FOR KINDY
LEARN FROM HOME LESSON
ABOUT THE ADVENT
WREATH)**

WHAT IS AN ADVENT WREATH?

The Advent wreath is a symbol of the beginning of the Church year. It is a circular evergreen wreath with five candles, four around the wreath and one in the centre.

The four outer candles represent the period of waiting during the four Sundays of Advent. There are usually three purple candles, and one pink candle and a white candle in the centre. Each Sunday of Advent one of the candles is lit and a prayer offered.



WHAT YOU'LL NEED

Paper or cardboard 5 cardboard- rolls paper plate green card or dried leaves glue/tape

**DOWNLOAD
PRINTABLE HERE!**



Cut out the candles being careful not to chop off the flames.

Wrap the paper around each cardboard roll, securing with glue or tape.

Using scissors or a sharp craft knife, cut 4 'X' slits around the plate and a circle in the centre. Push the candles through the 'X's to secure in place.

Finish decorating with paper leaves or even dried leaves from the garden.

Use the link above to download the free printable advent wreath template.

Once you've downloaded the template print onto some strong white paper or card.

Colour all the parts (love, hope & peace in purple, joy in pink and Christ leave white.)



HOW TO BUILD YOUR WREATH IN PICTURES

1



2



3



Add "Christ's" candle to the centre of the wreath on Christmas day!

4

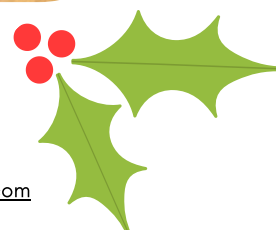


Set up your wreath in a prominent part of your home. Fold down all the 'flames' and each Sunday in advent, lift up one of the flames.

5



6





ADVENT WREATH LITURGY

Now that you have made your own advent wreath, use this simple liturgy to mark the "lighting" of the candles each week.

Advent is all about watching and waiting for Jesus, who is the light of the world, to be born.

To Begin

Create a sacred space in the centre of the dining table with a wreath, 3 purple candles and one pink one. Beginning on the Saturday evening of the first Sunday of Advent, bless the wreath and the first candle. Light one candle. On the second week, bless the wreath and the second candle. Light both candles. Continue for the next two weeks, repeating the ritual. On Christmas Eve, light all four candles and then in the centre of the wreath, bless a white candle and light it. This is the Christ Candle.

All make the sign of the cross as the leader says...



Leader: Our help is in the name of the Lord.
Family: Who made heaven and earth.

Reader: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.
Upon those who lived in a land of gloom a light has shone.
You have brought them abundant joy and great rejoicing.
They rejoice before you as people rejoice at harvest, as they exult. when dividing
The Word of the Lord.

Family: Thanks be to God.





Leader: 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 and guides us, he is the Saviour of every nation.

Leader: 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.

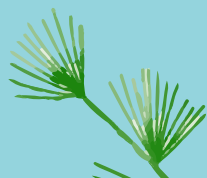
May he come quickly and not delay.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Family: Amen



Hope is a predominant theme of Advent. The Israelites hoped for a Messiah to come, and Christ entered the world. We are hopeful for the arrival of Christ again into the world.





JESSE TREE

HAVE YOU EVER HEARD ABOUT THE JESSE TREE?

A Jesse Tree represents the family tree of Jesus Christ. Each ornament represents a story from the Bible that tells about God's people before Jesus was born. Each Story shows God's salvation plan and tell how He guided humanity to prepare for the coming of the Messiah.

WHAT TREE SHOULD I USE?

You may like to hang your Jesse tree ornaments on your Christmas tree or you can create a tree just for these ornaments. If you want to create a tree, there are many different ways to accomplish this. For example: create a tree shape from paper and attach it to a wall (using blu-tack) or add a paper tree to a large bulletin board. You could also create a tree with gumtree branches or bare sticks and branches.

WHAT YOU NEED

- Printable ornaments printed on cardstock
- optional: laminator
- scissors
- hole punch
- string
- tree branch or small tree
- a children's bible



- Print and cut out the ornaments from the printable. You can laminate them.
- Punch a hole in the top and attach a loop of string to each ornament.
- Follow the daily bible reading list and add one ornament to the tree each day starting on 1st December.

GET YOUR
PRINTABLE
HERE





A branch will grow
from a stump of a tree that was cut down.
So a new king will come
from the family of Jesse.
The Spirit of the Lord will rest upon that king.
The Spirit gives him wisdom, understanding,
guidance and power.
And the Spirit teaches him to know and respect
the Lord.

At that time the new king from the family of Jesse will
stand as a banner for the people. The nations will
come together around him. And the place where he
lives will be filled with glory.

ISAIAH 11: 1-10





M&M CHRISTMAS STORY

GRAB A PACKET OF M&MS FOR
THIS QUICK AND EASY
ACTIVITY



You see M stands for another name for Jesus. What could it be? – yes M could be for Messiah or Magi or even Manger where he lay.



The E is for the East where the star shone so bright.



The 3 is for the Wisemen who came to see the baby at night.



And W is for Worship, which is what we do when we go to Mass.



Colour Your Own Christmas Cards

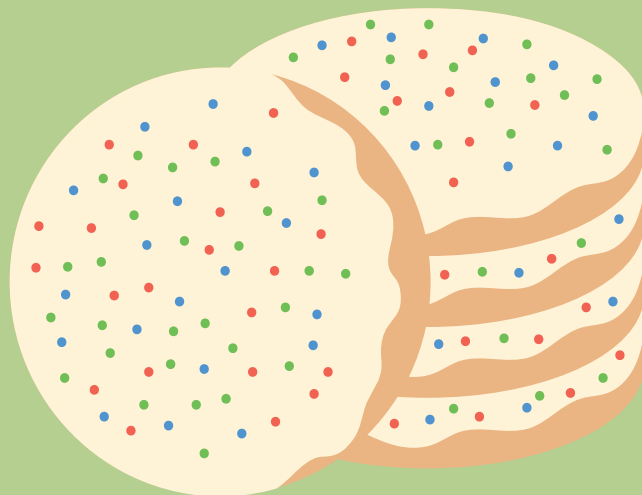


Click on the card you'd like to colour to access the printable



Season's Eatings!

Christmas Baking Recipes





CHRISTMAS WREATH COOKIES



INGREDIENTS

- 250g butter, softened
- 1/2 tsp vanilla bean extract
- 1/3 cup (75g) caster sugar
- 2 1/4 cups (335g) plain flour, sifted
- 1/4 cup (45g) rice flour, sifted
- 1 tsp mixed spice
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 200g baking 70% cocoa dark chocolate, chopped
- rainbow pearls or sprinkles, to decorate
- 225g white chocolate melts, melted

PREP TIME: 30MINS
COOK TIME: 1HOUR
MAKES: 32



DIRECTIONS

Use an electric mixer to beat the butter, vanilla and sugar in a bowl until pale and creamy. Add the combined flour and spices and stir to combine.

Divide dough into 3 equal portions. Roll each portion between 2 pieces of baking paper to 3mm thick. Place in the fridge for 15 mins or until firm.

Preheat oven to 150C. Use a 7-8cm fluted cutter to cut wreath shapes from 1 dough portion. Use a 4cm fluted cutter to cut centres from biscuits. Use a skewer to make a hole in the top of each wreath.

Transfer baking paper with wreath biscuits to baking trays. Bake for 20 mins or until pale golden. Set aside to cool on trays for 5 mins before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.

Repeat with remaining dough. Place the biscuits on baking trays lined with baking paper.

Place dark chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a saucepan of simmering water (make sure the base of the bowl doesn't touch the water). Heat, stirring occasionally, for 5 mins or until melted. Spoon into a sealable plastic bag and snip off 1 corner.

Drizzle dark chocolate over half the biscuits. Decorate with rainbow pearls. Place in fridge for 30 mins or until chocolate sets. Repeat with melted white chocolate, pearls and remaining biscuits. Thread ribbon through holes.



JAM CRESCENTS

INGREDIENTS

For the pastry

- 300ml thickened cream
- 250g butter at room temperature
- 2 tablespoons caster sugar
- 1 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 400g plain flour

For the filling

- 1 cup good quality raspberry or plum jam



PREP TIME: 30MINS
COOK TIME: 15MINS
MAKES: 32

DIRECTIONS

To make the pastry, place all the ingredients in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment. Mix together on medium speed until well combined and a dough is formed.

Divide the dough into 4 equal balls and wrap each ball in plastic wrap. Rest in the fridge for at least 15 minutes.

Take one ball of pastry and roll out into a circle, around 3mm thick. Using a pizza cutter or sharp knife, slice into 8 equal triangles, just like slicing a pizza.

Take a teaspoon of the jam and place near the wide end of a triangle. Roll into a crescent shape. Repeat until you have used all the pastry and filling.

Place on baking paper lined biscuit trays and bake in batches in a preheated 200°C oven (180°C fan forced) for 12-15 minutes. They should be slightly golden, but will still be mostly pale all over.

Cool on a wire rack and dust with icing sugar before serving.





CARAMILK CHRISTMAS CRACK

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 x 225g box Jatz crackers
- 1 1/2 cups brown sugar 185g butter, chopped
- 1 tsp sea salt
- 2 x 180g blocks Caramilk chocolate, melted
- 100g dark chocolate, melted
- 2 x 20g packets giant chocolate stars
- Green and red mini m&m's, to decorate
- Mint flavoured m&m's, to decorate
- Glamour and sparkle sprinkles, to decorate

RECIPE NOTES

- You need to pour the caramel sauce over the crackers slowly so they don't lift and float to the surface.
- Store crack in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 5 days.
- This recipe requires cooling and 1 hour refrigeration.



DIRECTIONS

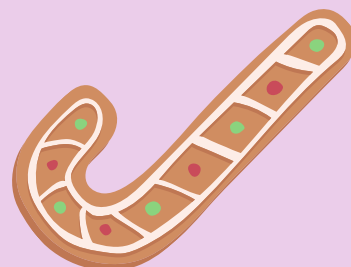
Preheat oven to 180C/160C fan-forced. Grease a 1.5cm-deep, 24cm x 33.5cm baking tray. Line base and sides with baking paper, extending paper 2cm above edges of tray.

Arrange crackers in a single layer on base of prepared tray, trimming crackers to fit and fill any gaps.

Place brown sugar, butter and salt in a saucepan over medium heat. Cook, stirring, for 5 to 6 minutes or until butter is melted and sugar has dissolved. Bring to the boil. Cook, stirring constantly, for a further 2 to 3 minutes or until mixture has thickened. Remove from heat.

Carefully and slowly pour mixture over crackers to cover evenly (see notes). Bake for 5 to 8 minutes or until mixture is bubbling. Carefully remove from oven and stand for 2 minutes. Drizzle with melted Caramilk. Spread gently and evenly to cover. Set aside for 15 minutes to cool. Refrigerate for 10 minutes or until Caramilk has just set.

Working quickly, drizzle top of crack with melted dark chocolate. Decorate with chocolate stars, m&m's and sprinkles. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour or until firm. Lift crack from pan. Using a warm, sharp knife, cut into pieces. Serve.





ADVENT & *Christmas* LESSONS

Click on the links for Advent and Christmas learn-from-home lessons.
We encourage you to spend some time together doing at least one
of the lessons from your stage.

Kindergarten

[Lesson 1 - Mary Says Yes \(PPSX\)](#)

[Lesson 2 - The Advent Wreath \(PPSX\)](#)

[Lesson 3 - Giving Tree \(PPSX\)](#)

[Lesson 4 - Away In A Manger \(PPSX\)](#)

[Lesson 5 - The Special Gift \(PPSX\)](#)

[Lesson 6 - Nativity \(PPSX\)](#)

Year 1 & Year 2

[Lesson 1 - Waiting In Hope \(PPSX\)](#)

[Lesson 2 - Mary and Joseph \(PPSX\)](#)

[Lesson 3 - We Prepare for Jesus \(PPSX\)](#)

[Lesson 4 - Prince of Peace \(PPSX\)](#)

[Lesson 5 - Shepherds \(PPSX\)](#)

[Lesson 6 - A Baby Is Born \(PPSX\)](#)

[Lesson 7 - Gift of the Heart \(PPSX\)](#)

Year 3 & Year 4

[Lesson 1 - The Lord Cares for Creation \(PPSX\)](#)

[Lesson 2 - Joyful Preparation \(PPSX\)](#)

[Lesson 3 - The Prophet's Candle \(PPSX\)](#)

[Lesson 4 - The Bethlehem Candle \(PPSX\)](#)

[Lesson 5 - The Shepherd's Candle \(PPSX\)](#)

[Lesson 6 - The Angel's Candle \(PPSX\)](#)

[Lesson 7 - Waiting Is Over \(PPSX\)](#)

Year 5 & Year 6

[Lesson 1 - Signs of Covenant \(PPSX\)](#)

[Lesson 2 - Deacons \(PPSX\)](#)

[Lesson 3 - Called to Vocation \(PPSX\)](#)

[Lesson 4 - Log on to God \(PPSX\)](#)

[Lesson 5 - Messenger of Hope \(PPSX\)](#)

[Lesson 6 - The Coming of the Kingdom \(PPSX\)](#)

[Lesson 7 - Peace on Earth \(PPSX\)](#)



Bedtime Prayers for Advent & Christmas

4,3,2,1...count the weeks till Jesus comes
Each week we add another light,
Our hope for Jesus growing bright.
We pray, we share, we do our part
To welcome Jesus to our heart.



Jesus,

Just as you came among us with your
message of love and peace, tonight we
pray for

.....
Guide them and may they always walk
beside you.



Dear God, Thank you for all the fun and
excitement of Christmas. Thank you for
the amazing nativity story, that tells us
about the birth of Jesus. Thank you for
sending us your Son, a gift from you into
this world. As we look at the lights on
the tree, remind us of the light Jesus
brought to this Earth. When we sing
songs and carols, remind us of the hope
Jesus showed everyone. And as we
open the gifts and presents, remind us
that Jesus was the best gift ever. Help
us to share special times with family
and friends this Christmas, And to share
the light, hope and gift of Jesus to the
world.

Jesus,
Let Advent begin. Help us to be
beacons of hope, patience, good
deeds, peace and love. Be our guide at
this time. Grant us what we need to
keep our lights shining, to shed light on
the road that leads others to you.

Dear God,
Let the grace of this season be with me,
Help me not to become distracted by
things that take me away from your
goodness. During these days and weeks
of anticipation, make me mindful of joy,
hope and the wonder of your love.



Amen



DECEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
28 1st Sunday of Advent Light / colour in the 1st candle of your Advent Wreath	29 Arrange a 'sacred space' at home with your advent calendar, wreath, perhaps a photo of your family and any other holy objects	30 Say thank you to a friend and family member for what you like about them	1 Write 'I love you' to your parents under the tree
5 2nd Sunday of Advent Light / colour in 2 candles on your Advent Wreath	6 Google Saint Nicholas, whose feast day is today	7 Look up at the wonder of the night sky tonight and say thanks to God	8 Be nice to someone who is not like a friend. Be nice to somebody who is not like you.
12 3rd Sunday of Advent Light / colour in 3 candles on your Advent Wreath	13 Be nice to your brother/sister	14 Pray a Hail Mary	15 Say a prayer for someone who is not like you.
19 4th Sunday of Advent Light / colour in 4 candles on your Advent Wreath	20 Say a 'sorry' prayer for something you should not have done.	21 Say a prayer for all the world's hungry people	22 Set the table for someone who is not like you and take the time to sit down with them.
26	27	28	29
<p><i>Keep the good</i></p> <p>NOTES:</p> <p><i>Jesus said that whatever you do to the least of these, you do to me.</i></p> <p><i>So let us be kind, caring, loving and generous.</i></p>			

DECEMBER 2021

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Write up your notes to and hide them under your pillows	2 Donate a little pocket money to Smiles through World Vision/ Catholic Mission/ Vinnies or another charity	3 Clean your bedroom without being asked;	4 Collect a card from the Christmas tree in the church for a child in need and donate a toy for Christmas / donate to Vinnies
8 Be nice to someone you do not like a lot.. Forgive someone who hasn't been nice to you	9 Be nice to someone you do not like a lot.. Forgive somebody who hasn't been nice to you	10 Hug everyone in your family today	11 Try to get to Reconciliation; Google a Christmas story or poem and read it to your family
15 Write a letter for the lonely Christmas time	16 Google your favourite Christmas Carol and sing together	17 Google your favourite Christmas Carol and sing together	18 Bake some cookies or sweets together
22 Write a letter for your family dishes to the table when it is finished	23 Help to wrap some Christmas presents	24 Read Luke 2:1-20 with your family (from your bible or google it) and then set up your Christmas Nativity Scene (colour one in)	25 
29 <i>Good deeds going...</i>	30 <i>Good deeds going...</i>	31 <i>Good deeds going...</i>	1 <i>Good deeds going...</i>

*Do for someone else you do it for me.
Living and let's share this Advent..*

[\(Click here for a printable version of this calendar\)](#)

Christmas Mass Times

THERE ARE MANY WONDERFUL
MASSES HAPPENING WITHIN OUR
LOCAL PARISH CHURCHES
ACROSS OUR DIOCESE.
CLICK HERE TO FIND A MASS
NEAR YOU.





Hymns and
Carols



Advent



Emmanuel - Steve Angrisano

Come, Lord Jesus

Light of the World - Lauren Daigle

Christmas is Coming - Jason Gray

Like A Candle - Monica O'Brien

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

O Come Divine Messiah



Christmas

Noel - Lauren Daigle

Oh What a Glorious Night - Sidewalk Prophets

Christmas Day - Chris Tomlin

He Shall Reign Forever More - Chris Tomlin

Glory Let There Be Peace - Matt Maher

Joy To The World - Pentatonix

O Holy Night - Josh Groban

Messiah - Francesca Battistelli

Silent Night - Dami Im

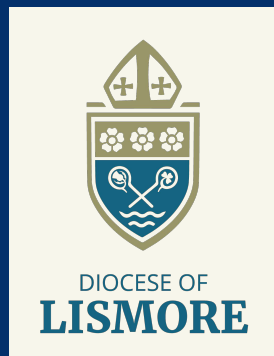
Carol of The Bells - Pentatonix

The First Noel - Chris Sebastian

Gloria (Christmas Medley)

More hymns and carols in our Advent/Christmas Playlist

For more news and information
about Catholic SRE visit
our website.



<https://ccd.lism.catholic.edu.au/>