

Advent Reflection – The Christmas Tree and its Decorations

Preparation: gather together Christmas Tree decorations as below, maybe a small 'real' Christmas tree and a parcel wrapped in Christmas paper.



Introduction

You may have already put your Christmas tree up at home, or you will be doing so in the next few days. You will also decorate your Christmas tree. Have you ever thought what the decorations and the tree say to us about Christmas? Let's have a look at some of the decorations we put on Christmas trees and what they say to us about Christmas.



Bauble - what shape is it? - a sphere! A sphere is the same shape as the world, and this reminds us of God's love for the world. He sent us his son on that first Christmas to share our life on earth for a time and to enable us to learn more about God.

Lights - for these to work they have to be connected to an electric socket, and we need to be connected to God. The light bulbs come in several different colours, but each one plays its part in making the tree attractive. People come in all shapes and sizes too, but each one of us has a part to play. Coloured lights suggest a celebration, and we are celebrating the birthday of Jesus. The string of bulbs gives out light, and Jesus came to give us light about the best way we can live.



Star - this guided the wise men to Jesus, and Jesus by his stories and teaching gives us guidance on the best way to live. In a way he provides us with a map for life.



Angel - the angel spoke to Mary to tell her Jesus was coming and that she was to be his mother. The angel spoke to the shepherds to let them know Jesus was born. Angels are God's messengers.

Evergreen Tree - it is always green so it symbolises life. It points towards heaven and so it reminds us about God, and also that Jesus told us that there is life for us in heaven even after we die.



Parcels/Gifts - remind us of the gifts the wise men brought to Jesus (Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh). At Christmas it is as much fun to give gifts as to receive them. Jesus was God's gift to us.

Christmas is a time of celebration but the celebration is not just about presents, trees, decorations - the main celebration is that Jesus was born and his birth has made such a difference to the world.

Prayer

Loving God, we give thanks for the baubles and decorations hanging on our trees, and for the coloured lights that shine from so many windows. We ask you to make us ready for Christmas. We know we are not ready if we take and never give and think only of ourselves. We know that Christmas brings a warm feeling into our lives, but that not everyone is warm at Christmas. Help us to play our part in helping those not as fortunate as we are. This we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.