

An Advent'urous design

Make this **Advent centerpiece**



Advent centerpiece

For this project, you will need:

- Round unfinished wood **charger plate**
- Small bottle of metallic **acrylic craft paint**
- **Paintbrush**
- 4 clear glass **votive candleholders**
- Purple **votive candles**
- 1 rose votive candle (or any shade of pink)
- Real or artificial **evergreen trims**
- Any other **trims** for placing around the votive candles

>> Paint the unfinished charger plate and set aside to dry. You may need to apply a couple of coats. Arrange the four glass votive holders with votives inside. If you wish, affix bottom of glass votive holders with a dab of hot glue. This will keep them in place. Arrange the evergreen trims and any additional trims you wish.

Another idea:

>> Don't feel like painting one? Charger plates come in many different colors and can be purchased inexpensively from any store that sells home goods.

For several Advents now, I have felt that I should observe the tradition of using an Advent wreath outside of church and in my own home. I keep meaning to do it. It keeps not happening. There is some psychological barrier that has me dragging my feet when it comes to putting a simple Advent wreath on the kitchen table. I decided to analyze why I never actually end up doing it, and what might make it happen.

First, from a decorative viewpoint, the idea of placing an evergreen wreath horizontally on a dining room table gives me pause. Secondly, I am just going to say it, pink and purple are two of my least favorite colors. When they assume the form of asymmetrically positioned taper candles, they sort of make themselves a little too ... obvious. I really think I am letting style and aesthetics overshadow my faith – and that is why I never actually get a wreath.

And so I internalize, sense some guilt and suddenly feel less Catholic.

But is it sacrilegious to want to change it up a bit? To put the brakes on beating myself up over this matter, I

did some research. I must say, after doing so, I feel somewhat relieved.

The Advent wreath dates back to pre-Christian Germany and Scandinavia, where people used lighted candles in wreaths on cold and dark December days as a sign of hope (and in turn, thanks) for warmer, longer days. By the middle ages, Christians adopted this tradition and used these candle-lit wreaths as part of their preparation for Christ's coming into the world.

Today, there are several interpretations of the symbolism of the Advent wreath. But as it stands in our Catholic faith, the meaning and symbolism are quite beautiful. The evergreens signify continuous life, and the circle of the wreath (which has no beginning or end) symbolizes the eternity of God and everlasting life in

Christ. The four candles represent the four weeks of Advent. The color purple is associated with royalty and those three candles symbolize Christ being the "Prince of Peace." Rose is the color of the one unique candle, which is lit on the third Sunday, known as Gaudete Sunday, from the Latin word meaning "rejoice." And, of course, when all the candles are lit, Christ, the light of the world, is near, illuminating our lives.

Beautiful indeed, but purple and pink are still not my favorite colors. However, now that I know what they represent during the Advent season, I just may "get over it" and have a whole new appreciation for them in my dining room. And if it's done in a way that's more to my taste, I will commit to making this the year we put one out in our home. ☺



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