

ST. PATRICK'S PARISH

DRUM BEAT NEWSLETTER

Healing and Reconciliation Ministry



December 2025



Sharing stories and reflections that build understanding, healing, and unity with Indigenous peoples, a journey of truth and reconciliation.

Let the drum guide our hearts forward.

ADVENT REFLECTIONS WITH INDIGENOUS SPIRITUALITY

The Journey of Advent – A Season of Waiting and Transformation

Advent begins the Christian year—a time of expectation, longing, and preparation. It recalls Christ's coming in history, celebrates his presence among us today, and looks forward to his return in glory.

For Indigenous peoples in Canada, Advent resonates with traditional teachings of waiting, balance, and renewal. It is a season to honour the land, ancestors, and future generations while preparing our hearts for reconciliation and healing.

The Advent Wreath and Its Candles

The circle of evergreen branches represents eternity, while the four candles symbolize the unfolding journey toward Christmas. Each Sunday, a new candle is lit, reminding us of the gifts Christ brings into the world:

First Sunday – HOPE

The Candle of Hope recalls the prophets' promise of salvation. Today, hope is seen in Indigenous women and children who lead movements for justice, protect their lands, and walk long distances to bring messages to government. Their courage rekindles hope for a better future.

Second Sunday – PEACE

The Candle of Peace calls us to repentance and right relationship. The Church strayed when it imposed residential schools, silencing Indigenous languages and spirituality. Advent invites us to repent, listen, and bear fruit worthy of reconciliation.

Third Sunday – JOY

The Candle of Joy celebrates renewal and balance. Indigenous spirituality teaches that joy is found in relationship with the land and responsibility to future generations. By upholding Indigenous rights, we participate in the fulfilment of prophecy.

Fourth Sunday – LOVE

The Candle of Love reminds us that peace is more than the absence of violence—it is justice, mutuality, and recompense. Advent love calls us to insist on fairness, restoration, and shared flourishing.

Christmas Day – The Christ Candle

The Christ Candle proclaims Jesus as the Light of the World. If Christ were born today into an Indigenous community, would we recognize him? Advent challenges us to learn, unlearn, and prepare to meet God in our Indigenous neighbours.



Creator's life shined out from the Word, giving light to all human beings. This is the true Light that comes to all the peoples of the world and shines on everyone. The Light shines into the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome it or put it out.

JOHN 1:4-5 (FIRST NATIONS VERSION)

ADVENT REFLECTIONS WITH INDIGENOUS SPIRITUALITY

Advent and Indigenous Peoples in Canada

Walking Together in Truth and Reconciliation

Advent is not only about waiting for Christ—it is about preparing our hearts for justice. In Canada, this means acknowledging the wounds of colonization and walking alongside Indigenous peoples in healing. Each candle becomes a call to action:

- **Hope:** Believe in a future where Indigenous children grow up safe, loved, and connected to their culture.
- **Peace:** Repent of past wrongs and commit to right relationships.
- **Joy:** Celebrate Indigenous wisdom, languages, and traditions as gifts to the whole Church.
- **Love:** Working together. Insist on justice, land rights, and fair sharing of resources.



Indigenous Spirituality and Advent

Indigenous teachings emphasize balance, interconnectedness, and responsibility to future generations. These values echo Advent's call to prepare for Christ by living justly and caring for creation. Lighting the candles becomes more than ritual—it is a reminder that reconciliation is spiritual work, rooted in both faith and action.



Practical Ways to Honour Advent with Indigenous Neighbours

- Invite Indigenous voices into Advent liturgies and reflections.
- Use bilingual or Indigenous languages in prayers and songs.
- Support local Indigenous initiatives for land, water, and cultural preservation.
- Share meals, stories, and traditions that honour both Christian and Indigenous teachings.
- Reflect on treaties as sacred covenants, calling us to faithfulness and justice.

Closing Reflection

The flame of each Advent candle is more than light—it is a fire within us, a longing for justice and healing. As we journey through Advent, may we walk with our Indigenous neighbours in hope, peace, joy, and love, preparing together for the Light of Christ who comes to make all things new.