

The Christingle

Christingle means 'Christ light' and is a lovely way, in the darkness of Winter days, to think about the importance of Jesus in our world, our relationships and in our lives. Each element represents something special and we pray as we create the Christingle.

To make the Christingle you will need:



- An Orange
- Red Ribbon/Strip of red paper long enough to fit round the middle of the Orange - and a piece of sticky tape to hold it.
- Four cocktail sticks
- Fruits (Raisins) and soft Sweets
- A Candle (Birthday cake candle & holder) and matches to light it

Make sure you have all the items ready before you begin the time of prayer to create the Christingle

Making & Celebrating the Christingle

Please read through the instructions first so that you are prepared to lead everyone through the Christingle. You may want to use these (or similar words) as you create your Christingle. This time of prayer is designed as a time of sharing as a family at each stage of the make, so please try to leave enough time and encourage everyone to share. You may also wish to pray in your own words, or add other prayers as appropriate.

Introduction:

We are here in this special time of Advent, as we get ready to celebrate Christmas, to think about who Jesus is and why he was born in Bethlehem. During this special time we will make a Christingle, which means Christ-light, to remember the joy Jesus brings.

The Orange

We hold the Orange in our hands. The Orange represents the World and all of God's Creation.

Q: What is your favourite thing about the World?

(Take some time to share thoughts and responses to this question together)

Q: Are there any places in the World we should pray for? Perhaps places we have heard about on the news, or places where other members of our family live?

(Take a moment to name some of these places - and perhaps to talk about the people and issues they bring up)

Let us pray:

Creator God, you gave us all the wonders of the world. Help us to always see you in the beauty and wonders of your creation. Amen

The Red Ribbon

We wrap a piece of red ribbon (or a strip of red paper) around the middle of the Orange and fasten with sticky tape. The red ribbon represents God's love which surrounds the whole world and is for everyone.

Q: Who are the people who help us know that God loves us?

(Encourage your child to think of as many different people as they can and to identify the various ways they help them know that God loves them)

Q: What could you do to share God's love with others? Who might that be?

(Again, encourage your child to be creative in thinking of different ways in which they can share God's love and to name some of the people they might try to do this with.)

Let us pray:

Loving God, you sent your Son, Jesus, to love us and to show us how to love you more. Thank you for the gift of your amazing love. Amen

The Four cocktail sticks

Obviously these are quite sharp so younger children may need extra help or supervision. Please do NOT stick them into the Orange at this stage!

We count the cocktail sticks together - and, as we do, we name the Four Seasons: Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter

Q: Which is your favourite season and why?

(Make sure everyone has the chance to share - including any grown ups!)

Q: Can you name something good about each of the four seasons?

(Try to encourage the view that each season has gifts and benefits - even if it's a season we don't like!)

Let us pray:

God of all time, you give us the beauty of the seasons to lead us through the year. Help us to use our time wisely. Amen.

The Fruits and Soft Sweets

Put some raisins and/or soft sweets on each of the four cocktail sticks. We then put the loaded sticks evenly around the top half of the Orange. These represent all the good gifts we get from God.

Q: What's the best gift you've ever been given? Why?

(This is a very general question designed just to get them thinking about gifts we have.)

Q: What are some of the gifts you have been given by God?

(This question may inspire responses around Creation, Relationships, Family etc. but also gifts and talents they have themselves.)

Let us pray:

Generous God, you have blessed us with many gifts. Help us to always be generous, especially with those who have less than us. Amen.

The Candle

Do not light the candle at this stage.

We put a candle into the top of our Orange. This represents Jesus, who is the Light of the World.

Q: How many different sources of light can you think of?

(Encourage them to think of natural sources as well as those made by humans.)

Q: How might you share the light of Jesus with others?

(Think about how our positive actions can brighten someone else's life. Try to encourage as many practical and possible ideas!)

Carefully light the candles and hold the Christingle carefully, using both hands. Younger children may not be able to hold it but should look at the Christingle during the final prayer.

Let us pray:

Jesus, Light of the World, we welcome you now, and all your gifts. May the time we have spent making our Christingle help us to get ready to welcome you again this Christmas. May your light always shine in us and through us. Amen.

You may like to sing a hymn or listen to a song about light (E.g. This Little Light of Mine) and display your Christingle in a safe place. You could also light the candle for a short time on Christmas Day!