Christmas Prayer Tree

A simple prayer activity

Explain to the children that you will be creating a Christmas Prayer Tree using the themes of hope, peace, joy and love. This will be used to help us **pray together** and share our own prayer requests.

Divide the class into four groups. Each group represents a different Advent theme. Every child can then receive a Christmas shape template to decorate (***it is advisable to print these on A4 card***).

- Group 1 receive a **candle** template to represent **hope**.
- Group 2 receive a **dove** template to represent **peace**.
- Group 3 have an **angel** template to represent **joy.**
- Group 4 have **heart** template to represent **love**.

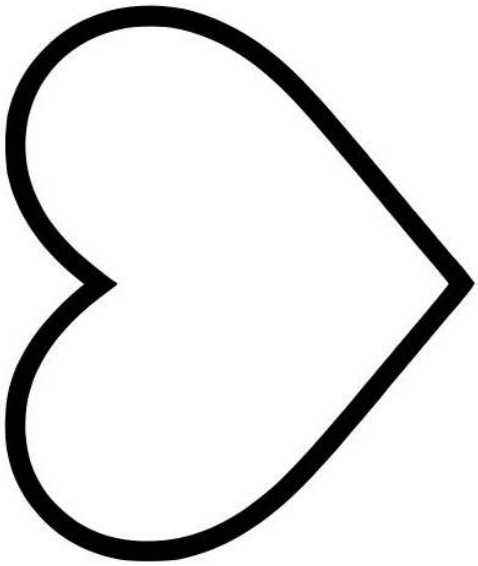
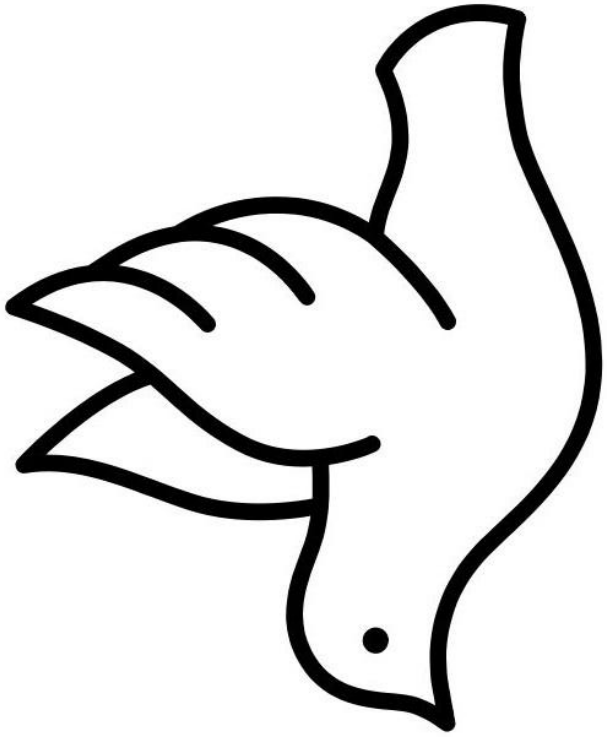
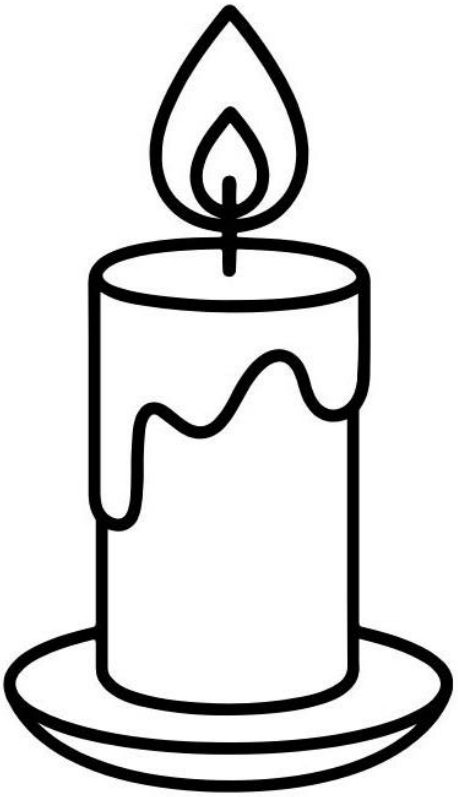
Invite young children to decorate one side of their template. When they have finished invite the children to write the name of someone they want to pray for, or to write a short prayer request (this could be suggested in just a couple of words) on the blank side of their template. For older children, their prayer requests should be in keeping with the template **themes**:

- **Candle/Hope** - pray for something you hope for this Christmas (not material possessions)
- **Dove/Peace** - pray for peace in a particular place, or peace for a particular person/people.
- **Angel/Joy** – pray in thanksgiving for someone who brings you joy, or ask God to help you share His joy with others this Christmas.
- **Heart/Love** - pray in thanksgiving for someone you love, or ask God to help you share His love with others this Christmas.

Please note these template decorations can be anonymous.

Once the templates have been decorated, place them in a container on your class prayer table. During Advent, invite a pupil to select a few templates and place them on a Christmas Prayer Tree. This prayer tree could be a small artificial Christmas tree or a large image of a Christmas tree on a display board. After decorations have been placed on your class tree, say the following prayer:

Heavenly Father, as we place our decorations on this Christmas Prayer Tree, we bring these and other prayers that we hold in our hearts to you. *(Spend about 30 seconds in silence, giving pupils time to bring their prayers to mind. As pupils grow more comfortable with silence, this time can be gradually extended.)*

In this busy time of year, as we prepare for the birth of your Son, Jesus, help us to remember how important it is to have some quiet time with you. In this silence, fill our hearts with hope, peace, joy, and love, so that we may share your goodness and kindness with everyone we meet today.

We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord. Amen.