**FIRST ADVENT SUNDAY - THE NEARNESS OF GOD**

**Song:** In the name of the Father, in the name of the Son, in the name of the Holy Spirit. God blessed me. (2)

**Guide:** We begin today the Advent Season and we announce to you, sisters, good news, a great joy for all the people; listen to it with a joyful heart: thousands and thousands of years had passed since, at the beginning, God created heaven and earth and, granting them a continuous progress through time, wanted the waters to produce a swarm of living and flying birds on the earth.

Thousands and thousands of years, from the moment when God wanted man to appear on earth, made in his image and likeness, to dominate the wonders of the world and, when contemplating the greatness of creation, praise the Creator. Thousands and thousands of years, during which the thoughts of man, inclined to evil, filled the world with imperfection to such an extent that God decided to purify it, becoming one of many. God decides to approach humanity, to become man.

**Reading:** *"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light, on those who lived in the land of darkness a light has shone. You have multiplied joy, you have increased joy, they rejoice in your presence, as you enjoy in the harvest, as when joy reigns over the distribution of triumph."* Isaiah 9:1-2, Word of God (1 minute of silence)

**Guide**: The old trunk is re-sprouting, it trembles because God has sown Himself in our flesh... salvation continues being shared sap. God implies men and women who are weaving the history and have been and continue been good news of His nearness; 250 years ago He counted on John Bonal; He made him a walker, witness of His love; He made him a sower of dreams, a pioneer of paths of closeness and forgiveness...

**LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE:** (A Sister lights the Candle)

**Guide 2:** Around the advent wreath we remember the promise of the Lord: "I will be with you every day until the end of the world." Then, be awake and vigilant to see his light, his peace, his joy in every moment. May this first candle that we light help us with its light to prepare our hearts, to welcome God who arrives in each person, situation or need of our broken and wounded world.

**All the Sisters:** We thank you, oh God, for giving us a community, for giving us sisters and brothers. May we all prepare ourselves to live in this time, warmer relations, from closeness and fraternity, relationships from You. May we make alive the assurance that "your Love will renew us".

**Advent Song**