

Vorfreude, schönste Freude

Music: Hans Naumilkat, Text: Erika Engel

This song is about the anticipation of Christmas during the time of Advent (from latin *adventus*, meaning “coming”). The “**Adventszeit**”, the **time of Advent**, in Germany refers to the four weeks before Christmas, starting with Advent Sunday. **Advent Sunday** is the Sunday three days after the last Thursday in November, which fell on December 2 in 2012. In Germany, Advent Sunday is called the **First Advent**, and the following three Sundays are enumerated **Second, Third and Fourth Advents**, respectively. In 2012, the Fourth Advent falls on December 23, the latest possible date for this day. During the Adventszeit, Germans mentally wind down the year, go to churches to listen to **Adventskonzerts**, for example Bach or Händel, etc., watch reviews on TV, wrestle in shopping malls just like Americans, and celebrate each of the four Advents by lighting a candle on their **Advent wreaths**. These wreaths typically consist of decorated fir twigs and four thick, slow-burning candles of unequal length. The candles are lit, starting with the longest candle on the First Advent, the longest and second-longest candles on the Second Advent, and so forth, so that on the Fourth Advent they all reach about the same length. People will typically have coffee and Christmas bakewares (e.g., Lebkuchen, Stollen) when they light the candles of the wreath, spend time together and listen to Christmas music.

Vorfreude, schönste Freude, Freude im Advent.
Tannengrün zum Kranz gewunden,
rote Bänder dreingebunden,
und das erste Lichtlein brennt.
Erstes Leuchten im Advent, Freude im Advent.

Anticipation [*lit: Vor-freude = “pre-joy”*], most beautiful joy, joy of (in, during) Advent.
Green of the fir tree wrought to a wreath,
red ribbons tied into it,
and the first light is shining [*lit.: is burning, referring to a candle*].
First radiance of Advent, joy of Advent.

Vorfreude, schönste Freude, Freude im Advent.
Heimlichkeit im frühen Dämmern,
basteln, stricken, rascheln, hämmern,
und das zweite Lichtlein brennt.
Heimlichkeiten im Advent, Freude im Advent.

Anticipation, most beautiful joy, joy of Advent.
Secrets during early dawn,
tinkering, knitting, rustling, hammering,
and the second light is shining.
Secrets of Advent, joy of Advent.

Vorfreude, schönste Freude, Freude im Advent.
Was tut Mutti, könnt ihr’s raten?
Kuchen backen, Äpfel braten,
und das dritte Lichtlein brennt.
Süße Düfte im Advent, Freude im Advent.

Anticipation, most beautiful joy, joy of Advent.
What does Mommy, can you guess it?
Baking cake, frying apples,
and the third light is shining.
Sweet smells of Advent, joy of Advent.

Vorfreude, schönste Freude, Freude im Advent.
Kinderstimmen leise, leise,
üben manche frohe Weise,
und das vierte Lichtlein brennt.
Lieder klingen im Advent, Freude im Advent.

Anticipation, most beautiful joy, joy of Advent.
Children’s voices, quietly, quietly,
practice many a happy tune,
and the fourth light is shining.
Songs are sounding in Advent, joy of Advent.