

Praying Advent

The season of Advent has begun...we are being bombarded on all sides to shop, to party, to indulge in preparing for Christmas...so many not even knowing what the true meaning of Christmas is---that God so loved our world that He sent His only begotten Son to dwell among us. Yes, he came to His own, but His own received Him not...Let each one of us pray for the grace to really understand the Gift of Jesus, especially in the Eucharist and to take some time each day, whether 5 minutes, or 30 minutes to be still and prepare our hearts. Here are some suggestions

Setting: Make a prayer space by using an Advent Wreath or Jesse Tree. Directions for these may be found at the following or on Utube:

<https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/activities/view.cfm?id=954>

<https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/activities/view.cfm?id=545>

Blessing of Advent wreath and online suggestions and prayers. If you have children or are teachers or catechists look at the #2 the NCEA site

#1 Advent 2018 - United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

[www.usccb.org › Prayer and Worship › Liturgical Year](http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-year)

#2 Advent Resources - Week One (12/3 - 12/9)

<https://www.ncea.org/advent>

#3 Praying Advent - Online Ministries - Creighton University

onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Advent/

<http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Advent/>

#4 FREE Daily Gospel Reflections from Bishop Robert Barron

<https://dailycatholicgospel.com/>

Get a mini-homily from Bishop **Barron** each morning, sent straight to your inbox!

#5 Readings - United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

www.usccb.org/bible/readings/012118.cfm

Brief daily prayer and reflections based on writings of Pope Francis and the readings

Week One: The Joy of knowing Jesus

Sunday: Where am I on my journey to meet Jesus? How can I meet Him today? **Prayer:** Jesus, I long for you to come into my life. Help me to be watchful and alert to the signs of your presence.

Monday: In what practical way can I make prayer a vital part of my Advent journey? **Prayer:** Lord, I believe in you. Strengthen my lack of faith.

Tuesday: How can I radiate to others the joy that comes from Jesus? **Prayer:** Jesus, as I wait for your coming anew into my heart at Christmas, fill me with the joy of your presence and help me to share it with those around me.

Wednesday: The Eucharist, the Bread of Life, gives us a pledge of eternal life. Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist. What difference does that make in my daily life? **Prayer:** Jesus, thank you for the gift you have given us of yourself in the Eucharist.

Thursday: What are some practical ways I can put on Christ in my life? **Prayer:** Jesus, no matter what happens, I trust in you and in your loving providence in my life.

Friday: How strongly do I believe that God will hear and answer my prayer? Do I also allow God to change my heart so that my requests are more in line with his desires? **Prayer:** Jesus, enlighten the eyes of my heart. Help me to believe that when I pray, even if I don't get what I want, I will get exactly what I need.

Saturday: How can I speak in a way that reflects the light of faith? Do I know how to proclaim the Good News even without words? **Prayer:** Jesus, you are the light of the world. Help me to think, speak, and act in ways that spread your love and your light.

Feast of the Immaculate Conception: Mary was chosen to play a special role in God's plan of salvation.

Through Baptism I too have been chosen. What is my role and how have I fulfilled it thus far? **Prayer:** Mary, my Mother, intercede for me that I might correspond to grace just as you did. Help me to say "yes" to God's invitation to be an apostle.

Week 2: God Consols Us

Sunday: In what way can I comfort those persons in my life who are suffering? **Prayer:** Holy Spirit, you are the Comforter. Be with me and with those who most need your comfort today.

Monday: In the sacrament of Penance we not only receive forgiveness of our sins, but also the special graces we need to avoid sin in the future. How can I take better advantage of this marvelous opportunity for spiritual growth? **Prayer:** Jesus, I trust in your mercy and love.

Tuesday: If life is getting burdensome, how can I turn to the Lord and receive his consolation? **Prayer:** Thank you, Lord, for the tenderness and love you show me. Help me to keep going despite the trials of life, and to trust in you with great hope.

Wednesday: How can I reach out to others during this Advent, especially the poor and those in greatest need? **Prayer:** Jesus, you told us that whatever we do to others, we do you. Help me to see you in those who are in need, and to reach out to them in whatever ways I can.

Thursday: In the rush of Christmas preparations, how can I find some time and space to listen in silence to the Lord's words of love? **Prayer:** Jesus, don't let me get so caught up in getting gifts for others that I forget to prepare my heart to receive the greatest gift---you!

Friday: How does my faith affect the way I view life and its events? How can I grow in faith so it makes a real difference in my life? **Prayer:** Jesus, thank you for the gift of faith and for the light it brings to the problems of life. May my faith be a lighted lamp to guide me close to you.

Saturday: At some point in the Advent journey the promise of Christ may seem distant. It may be easier to wonder: "What difference will it really make?" If that happens, it can help to recall a time when God's presence lifted me up.

Week 3: Hope in the Lord

Sunday: In what way can I reflect to others the joy that Jesus brings? **Prayer:** Fill me with joy, Lord, so that I may praise and glorify your name.

Monday: A promise carries with it a hope of fulfillment. How does hope in God's promises enrich my daily life? **Prayer:** Jesus give me a strong hope that never goes dim even in times of darkness.

Tuesday: At certain moments the reality of our sins might make us tremble. How can we make up for them? We can't, but Jesus can. That is why he came to be our Savior. **Prayer:** Lord Jesus, I trust in you as my Savior. Do not let me gloss over my sins or slide into despair over them, for in you I hope!

Wednesday: John the Baptist sought assurance from Jesus that he indeed was the Messiah. Jesus pointed to the evidence: 'the blind see, the deaf hear...' God sometimes works in dramatic ways in our lives, and at other times his work may be hard to detect. If someone is discouraged, can I help that person to see what God is doing in his or her life? **Prayer:** Jesus, open my eyes that I may see, and open my ears that I may hear. Help me to focus on you in order to bring others the joy of the Gospel.

Thursday: Have I left Jesus into my heart to heal my wounds? **Prayer:** Jesus, I trust you. Please come into my heart and fill it with your love.

Friday: The Holy Spirit sends us inspirations to help us follow Jesus better. How so I respond to them?

Prayer: Holy Spirit, come into my heart and transform it so that I may always welcome the Word of God.

Week 4: The Lord is Near

Sunday: Am I, like Mary, ready to open the door of my heart when Jesus knocks? **Prayer:** Jesus, I want to welcome you into my heart.

Dec. 23rd Our Advent journey is almost over. While I take care of last minute preparations, how can I make some time for the Lord? Have I been to confession lately? If not, this is an opportune time. **Prayer:** Lord Jesus, I await your coming in grace on Christmas. Help me to welcome you with joy!

Dec. 24th: Our Advent journey is at an end. Tomorrow the joy of Christ's birth will light up the world. How will I welcome him? **Prayer:** Jesus, help me to rejoice at your birth! Thank you for coming into the world to be our Savior.

Christmas Day: Each Christmas Jesus comes again into our hearts by grace. Yet he comes in humility. How is he coming to me today? **Prayer:** Lord Jesus, as I gaze on you in the manger, I am in awe at the love you have for each one of us. Help me to receive your love and radiate it to others.

All-men, women and children are invited to join the Sisters at Caritas for Advent prayer on Wednesdays at 5:45. Can you take 30 minutes during this busy season to spend time in communal prayer?