



# Advent

#PRAY25 GUIDE 2022



**Hallow Presents**

# Advent

**Feat. The Chosen**

Thank you for joining us in this Biblical journey from the beginning of time in Genesis to the birth of Jesus in the Gospels. From the Garden of Eden to a manger in the small town of Bethlehem, we'll reflect on God's constant, loving call to humanity for generations to do His will, including his call to you.

Alongside several members of the cast of The Chosen, we'll reflect on the Jesse tree narrative, which traces the lineage of Christ and how God fulfilled His promises to us in an unimaginable way – the Savior, a meek and humble infant born in a manger.

As we begin our time in prayer and reflection, notice the responses of God's chosen people. These next few weeks, ponder how these responses compare and contrast.

At the end of this Advent season, will you more fully say, "Here I am, Lord," with an open and humble heart? Will you be bolder in accepting God's call? Will you be filled with greater hope come the Nativity?

Keep this prayer guide near as you listen to the Daily Reflections of Advent #Pray25 featuring The Chosen. Underline the words or phrases in Scripture that stand out to you, and reflect further on the sessions through journaling and imaginative prayer writing. At the end of Advent, you'll trace your own journey from prophecy to fulfillment, darkness to light, despair to hope.

God Bless you, your friends, and your family, this Advent season!



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## DAY 1: IN THE BEGINNING

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

JOHN 1:1-14

Begin by carefully reflecting on these first few verses of the Gospel of John. Which phrases stand out to you?

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As we seek to grow closer to the true Light in this season of Advent, consider the areas filled with darkness in your life; how can you invite Christ's light into your life? How might your heart be transformed or renewed in this season of waiting?

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## DAY 2: ADAM & EVE

They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, “Where are you?” He said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.”

He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate.” Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?”

The woman said, “The serpent tricked me, and I ate.” The Lord God said to the serpent,

“Because you have done this,  
cursed are you among all animals  
and among all wild creatures;  
upon your belly you shall go,  
and dust you shall eat  
all the days of your life.  
I will put enmity between you and the woman,  
and between your offspring and hers;  
he will strike your head,  
and you will strike his heel.”

GENESIS 3:8-15



But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, “Where are you?” He said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.”

### Genesis 3:8-15

When God first seeks a relationship with Adam and Eve, they hide. Reflect on the times when you have been tempted to hide from God’s presence in your life. How has He continued to call on you in these moments?

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Then, after the Fall, God promises Adam and Eve that He will send a savior to crush the serpent, though this took generations upon generations. What promises are you waiting for Him to fulfill in your life? How can you wait for Him with prayer and patience?

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## DAY 3: NOAH

Only Noah was left, and those that were with him in the ark. And the waters swelled on the earth for one hundred fifty days. [...]

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, “As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. 11 I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.” God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living

creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

GENESIS 9: 23-24, 9: 8-17

When have you experienced Jesus’s invitation to follow Him? How have you received His invitations?

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When God calls on Noah to build the ark, he listens; how is God calling you this Advent? The story of Noah and the Ark reminds us of our need for a savior – where in your life do you need a savior this Advent?

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## DAY 4: ABRAHAM

Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill his son. But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven, and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” He said, “Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.” And Abraham looked up and saw a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. So Abraham called that place “The Lord will provide”; as it is said to this day, “On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided.”

The angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven, and said, “By myself I have sworn, says the Lord: Because you have done this, and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will indeed bless you, and I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of their enemies, and by your offspring shall all the nations of the earth gain blessing for themselves, because you have obeyed my voice.”

GENESIS 22:10-18



Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill his son. But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven, and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.”

### Genesis 22:10-18

Like Noah, Abraham accepts God’s call, but we can only imagine what this “yes” to sacrifice Isaac must have felt like. Abraham does not understand why God would demand such a sacrifice, yet he still surrenders himself to the will of God. In what areas of your life do you struggle to respond to God with “yes?”

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In what ways are you able to say “yes” to God and accept Him as your constant companion?

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## DAY 5: MOSES

Then Moses said, “I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up.” When the Lord saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” Then he said, “Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.” He said further, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Then the Lord said, “I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. [...] So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the

Israelites, out of Egypt.” But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” He said, “I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain.”

But Moses said to God, “If I come to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” God said to Moses, “I am who I am.”

EXODUS 3:3-14



But Moses said to God, “If I come to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” God said to Moses, “I am who I am.”

### Exodus 3:3-14

How do the stories of Noah, Abraham, and Moses that we have reflected on thus far relate to one another?

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What does “Here I am” mean to you? And how do you respond when God calls on you? Is it with the same, “Here I am, Lord” as Moses?

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DAY 6: MUSIC

# “O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL”

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” by Sean Beeson





## DAY 7: SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:  
‘Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make his paths straight.’”

Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of

vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

“I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

MATTHEW 3:1-12

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.’”

Matthew 3:1-12

Have you ever felt you're in the wilderness like John the Baptist – lost, cold, tired, alone?

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God continually calls on you, in the wilderness or not, just like he called on Abraham, John the Baptist, Mary, and many others. How can you make room for Him in your life this Advent? How can you accept God's invitation into greater communion with Him?

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## DAY 8: RUTH

But Naomi said, “Turn back, my daughters, why will you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? Turn back, my daughters, go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I should have a husband tonight and bear sons, would you then wait until they were grown? Would you then refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, it has been far more bitter for me than for you, because the hand of the Lord has turned against me.” Then they wept aloud again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

So she said, “See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law.” But Ruth said,

“Do not press me to leave you or to turn back from following you!

Where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die, I will die—there will I be buried. May the Lord do thus and so to me, and more as well, if even death parts me from you!”

When Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her. So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem.

RUTH 1:8-19

Ruth, like Mary, was a woman of action. She worked to make things right in the face of hardship and injustice; she surrendered her plans to God’s will. How can you imitate Ruth in your own life at home, work or school, or church?

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In what areas of your life does passivity tempt you from being bold? How can you be bold in your own journey to Bethlehem?

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## DAY 9: DAVID

Samuel did what the Lord commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, “Do you come peaceably?” He said, “Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.” And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, “Surely the Lord’s anointed is now before the Lord.” But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.” Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, “Neither has the Lord chosen this one.”

Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “Neither has the Lord chosen this one.” Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, “The Lord has not chosen any of these.” Samuel said to Jesse, “Are all your sons here?” And he said, “There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep.” And Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here.” He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The Lord said, “Rise and anoint him; for this is the one.” Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward.

1 SAMUEL 16:4-13



“The Lord said, “Rise and anoint  
him; for this is the one.””

### 1 Samuel 16:4-13

This passage from 1 Samuel reflects on the family tree  
that led to Jesus. What have you noticed about the  
people God chose in this lineage?

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How did God forgive David, the shepherd boy chosen to be king?  
Just as God loved Ruth, David, and many others through their  
brokenness, how has God forgiven you? How can you invite God  
into your heart and pray for mercy today?

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# DAY 10: ELIJAH

Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”  
He answered, “I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away.”

He said, “Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.” Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was

splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave.

1 KINGS 19:9-13

Elijah flees to Mt. Horeb, yearning to be with the Lord – hopeless, distressed, and exhausted. And then God reveals Himself to Elijah in the “sound of sheer silence,” on the same mountain where He spoke to Moses in the burning bush.

These are not the only quiet moments in Scripture in which God reveals Himself. Consider the very Nativity we are preparing for – the middle of the night in the small town of Bethlehem. As we prepare for the humble birth of Christ in the manger, how can you create space and time in the quiet to rest with God?

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# DAY 11: ISAIAH

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,  
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.  
The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,  
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of counsel and might,  
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.  
His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.  
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,  
or decide by what his ears hear;  
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,  
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;  
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,  
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.  
Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,  
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.  
The wolf shall live with the lamb,

the leopard shall lie down with the kid,  
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,  
and a little child shall lead them.  
The cow and the bear shall graze,  
their young shall lie down together;  
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.  
The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,  
and the weaned child shall put its hand on  
the adder's den.  
They will not hurt or destroy  
on all my holy mountain;  
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord  
as the waters cover the sea.

ISAIAH 11:1-9

“His delight shall be in the fear of the  
Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes  
see, or decide by what his ears hear;”

### 1 Samuel 16:4-13

We’ve journeyed thus far with several Old Testament figures who God chose but are still fully human and struggled with their imperfections and weaknesses just like us – Adam and Eve, Moses, Ruth, and David, among others. Isaiah presents us with a different kind of chosen person, someone in the lineage of Jesse. Someone who would rebuild the Kingdom.

Reflect carefully on Isaiah’s prophecy – what words stood out to you? Which phrases give you hope in this season of waiting for the birth of Jesus?

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## DAY 12: JONAH

The word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time, saying, “Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you.” So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days’ walk across. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day’s walk. And he cried out, “Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!” And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth.

When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. Then he had a proclamation made in Nineveh: “By the decree of

the king and his nobles: No human being or animal, no herd or flock, shall taste anything. They shall not feed, nor shall they drink water. Human beings and animals shall be covered with sackcloth, and they shall cry mightily to God. All shall turn from their evil ways and from the violence that is in their hands. Who knows? God may relent and change his mind; he may turn from his fierce anger, so that we do not perish.”

When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

JONAH 3:1-10

“...God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.”

### Jonah 3:1-10

Jonah flees when God first calls on him to journey to Nineveh. Struggling with the potential salvation of the Ninevites, who Jonah saw as unfit for God's grace, Jonah ends up in the belly of the whale. As we just read, Jonah accepts God's will the second time. Jonah preaches to the Ninevites, and they listen, and God extends His grace. When have you acted or thought as Jonah did in this story?

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When have you rejected God's call in your life? How have you resisted God's limitless mercy? How can you practice saying "yes" or "Here I am" during Advent?

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DAY 13: MUSIC

# “HOPE FOR EVERYONE”

“Hear the angels sing  
There’s hope for everyone  
To announce our King”





## DAY 14: THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see?

Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way before you.’

Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

MATTHEW 11:2-11

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.”

## Matthew 11:2-11

As we turn to the New Testament, remember the prophecies and promises we've reflected on in the last two weeks. In today's Gospel, John the Baptist's disciples ask Jesus if he is "the one who is to come" – if he is the Promised One.

How does Jesus show, rather than tell, John's disciples that he is the Messiah? Consider how God has shown His love for you in your life: what seasons or moments come to mind?

[illegible]



## DAY 15: LUKE 1

In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.

Once when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John.

You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. 16 He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” Zechariah said to the angel, “How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years.” The angel replied, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur.”

LUKE 1:5-20

How does Zechariah’s response differ from Mary’s “yes” to the Angel Gabriel? Can you call to mind a few times when your heart has been hardened like Zechariah’s? What dreams or longings have you closed your heart to recently or in the past? Take some time to write down these dreams and longings with God. How can you invite God into them to soften and bring peace into your heart?

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## DAY 16: ANNUNCIATION

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever,

and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

LUKE 1:26-38

“Here am I, the servant of the  
Lord; let it be with me according  
to your word.”

Luke 1:26-38

Today, we hear Mary’s bold “yes” in the Gospel of Luke. How does  
Mary’s response build on those of the Old Testament figures?

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How can you imitate Mary this Advent season, preparing your  
heart to be a dwelling place for Christ? Where in your life is God  
calling you to say “yes” to Him as Mary does?

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## DAY 17: VISITATION

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the

mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

LUKE 1:39-45

“Blessed are you among women, and  
blessed is the fruit of your womb...”

## Luke 1:26-38

This encounter between Mary, the Mother of God, and her cousin Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, beautifully demonstrates God's overflowing grace in their lives. It is a hidden moment filled with much meaning and joy. Mary exclaims the Good News. John the Baptist leaps inside Elizabeth's womb. Elizabeth cries excitedly.

How can you imitate Mary's example of faith that spills out in joy to serve others? Imagine Christ dwelling in your heart – how do you think and act with Him?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

## DAY 18: MAGNIFICAT

And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord,  
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of  
his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call  
me blessed;

for the Mighty One has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name.

His mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm;

he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of  
their hearts.

He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,  
and lifted up the lowly;

he has filled the hungry with good things,  
and sent the rich away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel,  
in remembrance of his mercy,

according to the promise he made to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

LUKE 1:46-55

Reflect on Mary’s beautiful “Magnificat,” her song of praise. What stood out to you? You might notice the change in verb tense – why does Mary speak in the past tense? Consider how you might magnify and praise God in this Advent season just like Mary does. How can you keep Him at the center of your life?

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# DAY 19: ZECHARIAH

On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him Zechariah after his father. But his mother said, “No; he is to be called John.” They said to her, “None of your relatives has this name.” Then they began motioning to his father to find out what name he wanted to give him. He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, “His name is John.” And all of them were amazed. Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue freed, and he began to speak, praising God. Fear came over all their neighbors, and all these things were talked about throughout the entire hill country of Judea. All who heard them pondered them and said, “What then will this child become?” For, indeed, the hand of the Lord was with him.

He has raised up a mighty savior for us  
in the house of his servant David,  
as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets  
from of old,  
that we would be saved from our enemies and  
from the hand of all who hate us.

Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our  
ancestors,  
and has remembered his holy covenant,  
the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham,  
to grant us that we, being rescued from the hands  
of our enemies,  
might serve him without fear, in holiness and  
righteousness  
before him all our days.  
And you, child, will be called the prophet of the  
Most High;  
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his  
ways,  
to give knowledge of salvation to his people  
by the forgiveness of their sins.  
By the tender mercy of our God,  
the dawn from on high will break upon us,  
to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the  
shadow of death,  
to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

LUKE 1:59-79

He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, “His name is John.” And all of them were amazed. Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue freed, and he began to speak, praising God.

## Matthew 11:2-11

Refer back to Day 15; after his doubting moment before the Angel Gabriel, Zechariah has been mute up until now, spending the term of Elizabeth's pregnancy in silence. Zechariah joyfully proclaims this great canticle after this long period of quiet waiting. Our own Advent journey reflects this necessary patience as we await the Nativity.

Can you relate to Zechariah in any way? Reflect on the beginning of this Advent season – were you struggling or full of joy? How do you feel now?

[illegible]



DAY 20: MUSIC

“AVE MARIA, GRATIA  
PLENA, DOMINUS  
TECUM”

“Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee”





## DAY 21: FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

“Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,  
and they shall name him Emmanuel,”

which means, “God is with us.” When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife ...

MATTHEW 1:18-24

“Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit...”

## Matthew 1:18-24

In today's Gospel reading, Joseph experiences the pressure of social expectations. Afraid of a potential scandal, he responds righteously.

Consider the traits you display when you're under pressure – what do you know about your character in times of stress and difficulty? How do you use your gifts during challenging moments? How is the Holy Spirit calling on you to wake up and follow God's call?

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## DAY 22: THE JOURNEY

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole world should be enrolled. This was the first enrollment, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. So all went to be enrolled, each to his own town. And Joseph too went up from Galilee from the town of Nazareth to Judea, to the city of

David that is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child.

LUKE 2:1-6

While this passage from the Gospel of Luke is short, the Holy Family's journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem likely didn't feel that way.

Imagine this scene of Joseph and Mary, pregnant with Jesus, traveling on foot. What do you see, hear, and feel? What do you notice about Joseph and Mary?

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## DAY 23: THE INNKEEPER

While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

LUKE 2:6-7

IMAGINE: Imagine what Bethlehem must have looked and sounded like with people returning home for the census. Crowded. Loud. Busy. Consider if you were the inn owner where Mary and Joseph knocked just hours before Mary gave birth.

What would you say to them? The innkeeper said there was no room, though we don't know why. When have you failed, like the innkeeper, to welcome Christ into your home and heart?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

## DAY 24: SHEPHERDS

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

LUKE 2:8-16

Have you noticed that the story of God’s chosen people is full of shepherds? Abraham, Moses, David. We read of the shepherds living in the fields who the angel of the Lord appeared to in the middle of the night. Did you know that shepherding had become an occupation at the margins of society at this point in time?

What emotions would God’s invitation stir up in your heart if you were a shepherd? How would you feel arriving at the manger?

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## DAY 25: WISE MEN

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were

overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

MATTHEW 2:7-12

What stands out to you in this passage? Consider the many reactions to the arrival of Jesus we’ve reflected on thus far: of Mary, Joseph, the innkeeper, the shepherds, and now Herod and the wise men.

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How do the reactions of Herod and the wise men differ from one another? How do you react now to Jesus coming into your life? To dwell in your heart?

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## DAY 26: THE CHRIST CHILD

For a child has been born for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
His authority shall grow continually,  
and there shall be endless peace

for the throne of David and his kingdom.  
He will establish and uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onward and forevermore.

ISAIAH 9:6-7

For a child has been born for us, a son  
given to us; authority rests upon his  
shoulders; and he is named Wonderful  
Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting  
Father, Prince of Peace.

## Isaiah 9:6-7

We return to Isaiah's prophecy of the Messiah generations before the birth of Christ in these very last days of Advent. Consider this great mystery of God's love for us: the King of Kings and Lord of Lords is an infant lying in a manger in the town of Bethlehem. Imagine yourself beside the baby Jesus – what do you see, hear, and feel?

[illegible]



DAY 27: MUSIC

O HOLY NIGHT! THE  
STARS ARE BRIGHTLY  
SHINING IT IS THE  
NIGHT OF THE DEAR  
SAVIOR'S BIRTH!

"O Holy Night" by Kat Hammock





## DAY 28: CHRISTMAS PRAYER

And Joseph too went up from Galilee from the town of Nazareth to Judea, to the city of David that is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there, the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Now there were shepherds in that region living in the fields and keeping the night watch over their flock. The angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were struck with great fear.

The angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.”

And suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

LUKE 2:4-14

“Glory to God in the highest  
and on earth peace to those  
on whom his favor rests.”

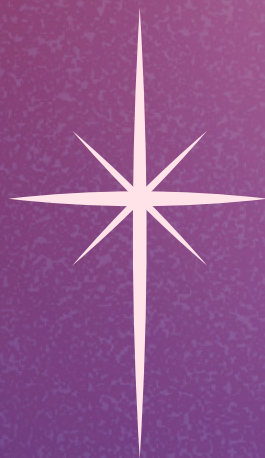
## Luke 2:4-14

Joy to the World! Our Savior is finally here. Our Advent journey has come to an end and now we sit together, admiring the baby Jesus.

What words stand out to you in the Gospel today? How does the angel's proclamation of the Good News make you feel?

[illegible]





# MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM ALL OF US AT HALLOW!

Thank you so much for praying with us this Advent season. We began our journey with Genesis and find ourselves renewed with the hope and joy of the Good News of the Nativity.