

A SEASON OF *Grace*



DAILY PRAYERS FOR ADVENT

INTRODUCTION

Advent is a time of waiting—waiting for the coming of Christ once again into our hearts and lives through the power of the Holy Spirit working within us. As the renowned spiritual writer Fr. Henri Nouwen reminds us in *The Genesee Diary*, “Advent leads to a growing inner stillness and joy allowing me to realize that the One for whom I am waiting has already arrived and speaks to me in the silence of my heart. So Jesus can be born in my life slowly and steadily and be received as the one I learned to know while waiting. It is a grace-filled time and God is close.”

The grace he is talking about is the Holy Spirit working in you and in your life to transform you onto the image of Christ and our world into the community of justice, love and peace that God desires. I hope that the daily prayers in this little booklet and the accompanying Scripture verse to look up in your Bible will help you become more deeply aware of God’s hidden presence and draw you ever more deeply into the mystery of Christ’s continuing presence with us on our lifetime journey to God.

Steve Mueller, Editor

OPEN MY HEART

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT — REVELATION 3:20

O Jesus, make my heart open to the word of God, make my heart open to goodness, make my heart open to the beauty of God every day, make my heart open to you. You knock at my heart to enter and grant me peace, peace of the soul. Let me open my heart to you!
Amen.

—Pope Francis

BE MY COMPANION

MONDAY, WEEK 1 — JOHN 3:16

O God, you gave us life and sent us your only Son to be with us at all times and in all places, so that we never have to feel lost in our struggles but always can trust that he walks with us. Let me not be afraid and to let you—whose love is greater than our own hearts and minds can comprehend—be my companion. *Amen.*

—Henri J.M. Nouwen
¡Gracias!



PREPARE FOR HIS COMING

TUESDAY, WEEK 1 — MATTHEW 24:43-44

Jesus, I am forever preparing for your arrival. How I hunger for your presence, yet I take not the time to wait for your coming, and to my great sorrow, you never arrive. Because I refuse to be silent, I cannot hear you. Because I refuse to await you, you cannot come. *Amen.*

—Macrina Wiederkehr, OSB
Seasons of Your Heart

MAKE STRAIGHT HIS WAY

WEDNESDAY, WEEK 1 — LUKE 3:4-5

Gracious God, inspire me this Advent to make straight my ways so that you can come to me and our world. Help me to be aware of the rough ways in my relationships with family, friends and strangers and smooth out the bumps so that you can be more present in me. By all these Advent works may I prepare a roadway for a truly holy Christmas. *Amen.*

—Edward Hays
Make Straight the Crooked Ways: Daily Reflections for Advent

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

THURSDAY, WEEK 1 — JOHN 13:34

Loving Father, teach me to see Jesus in the members of my family, especially in their distressing disguise. May

we love one another as you love each one of us, more and more each day, and forgive each other's faults as you forgive our sins. Help me to take whatever you give and give whatever you take with a big smile. *Amen.*

—St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta
A Simple Path

OPEN MY EARS

FRIDAY, WEEK 1 — MARK 4:9

O God, you speak to me in all the events of my life and not merely in times of formal prayer. Everything that happens, everything that I do, is a revelation of you. Help me learn to listen with attention and sensitivity, so my life becomes an encounter with you and all events become prayer. *Amen.*

—Thomas H. Green, SJ
Opening to God

YOU KNOW ME

SATURDAY, WEEK 1 — PSALM 139:13-14

All-Embracing, Compassionate Companion, you know me through and through. You love me completely as I am. You also know what challenges me, how I need to continue to grow, to constantly be more transformed. Join my heart to the expansiveness of your love. Take me to all who await my compassionate attention. *Amen.*

—Joyce Rupp, OSM
Prayers to Sophia

LONGING FOR YOUR LOVE

2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT — PSALM 119:41

O God, open my heart to the one who knocks, to accept Christ into the very depths of my being. The deepest longing of my heart is for love—for human love and divine love. Help me not to shut it out or slam the door so that even you cannot enter. *Amen.*

—William Johnston
Christian Mysticism Today

HEAL MY BLINDNESS

MONDAY, WEEK 2 — PSALM 146:8

Jesus, you come to heal my blindness, and blindness in regard to sin is my chief blindness. Help me to choose to see myself, my life, my past and present as they are, and keep me from choosing not to see—or not to see very much. *Amen.*

—Ruth Burrows, OCD
The Watchful Heart



MEET ME NOW

TUESDAY, WEEK 2 — PSALM 79:8

O God, you speak to me in ways I can understand and can meet me at any time, no matter how crazy things may seem. If you meet me where I am, then where I am is a place to meet you. I don't have to wait because you are ready to meet me now. *Amen.*

—James Martin, SJ
The Jesuit Guide to (Practically) Everything

SEEKING A NEW WAY

WEDNESDAY, WEEK 2 — ROMANS 12:9-10

O God, help me to treasure your Word and look to it for alternatives to what the world and nations say should be my response to any situation. Help me to tell stories of hope, of resurrection and new life, of justice and peace, and refuse to be caught in the trap of name calling or demeaning others. *Amen.*

—Megan McKenna
And Morning Came: Scriptures of the Resurrection



COME TO ME ANEW

THURSDAY, WEEK 2 — PSALM 9:1

O God, I praise and thank you for all your blessings and gifts, especially Christmas. You come to me in Jesus made flesh in the womb of Mary. May your Holy Spirit enlighten me to see that you love me and give me the great gift of your own Son. *Amen.*

—Charles E. Miller, CM
Opening the Treasures

SEEKING A NEW BEGINNING

FRIDAY, WEEK 2 — 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

O God, I hope for a new creation, a new beginning. The future is open-ended. When everything I value seems to be falling apart, you may be moving me toward a future I cannot imagine. The destruction of one shape my life has had allows you to give it a new shape. *Amen.*

—Macrina Scott, OSF
Bible Stories Revisited

CHANGE MY HEART

SATURDAY, WEEK 2 — EPHESIANS 3:16-17

Jesus, so often I forget that you never want human suffering, but peace. By your Spirit you dwell in me. Let it penetrate the harsh and rocky ground of my heart, and prepare me to be a bearer of reconciliation wherever

you may place me, to let a ray of hope shine through in our world. *Amen.*

—Brother Roger of Taizé
Awakened from Within

ENTER OUR LIVES ANEW

3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT — PHILIPPIANS 4:4

O Jesus, help us to be glad with the joy that you give us when we allow you to enter our life. Enter our lives anew and invite us to go out to the margins of life and proclaim the gospel with joy and courage! Help us discover true joy—the joy of making of our self a gift, of reciprocating the great gift that we have first received, without merit of our own. *Amen.*

—Pope Francis

BE WITH ME

MONDAY, WEEK 3 — JEREMIAH 24:7

O God, help me to find ways to be alone with you, to speak to you, to listen to you, to ponder your words deep in my heart and so be renewed and transformed. Fill me with your grace, which makes me do all things with joy. *Amen.*

—St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta
Total Surrender

FINDING MYSELF IN YOU

TUESDAY, WEEK 3 — JEREMIAH 19:13

O God, I cannot hope to find myself anywhere except in you. All my existence, my peace and my happiness depend on discovering myself in discovering you. If I find you I will find myself and if I find my true self I will find you. *Amen.*

—Thomas Merton
New Seeds of Contemplation

THE PEACE OF CHRIST

WEDNESDAY, WEEK 3 — JOHN 14:27

O God, when I am painfully conscious of turmoil, help me remember that Christ's love has made itself vulnerable to all that hatred can do and has conquered hatred, and as the life he gives is a life that has been through death and proved the stronger, so the peace he gives is something more than an absence of stress. *Amen.*

—Maria Boulding, OSB
The Coming of God

THANKS FOR YOUR GOOD GIFTS

THURSDAY, WEEK 3 — PSALM 118:24

O Gracious God, thank you for the good things of life. Help me always to appreciate the goodness of the world and the joyfulness of life, to rejoice and be glad

for all the great and small pleasures that come to me from you through creation. *Amen.*

—Richard Rohr, OFM & Joseph Martos
Why Be Catholic?

RELISHING MY INSIGNIFICANCE

FRIDAY, WEEK 3 — MATTHEW 13:31-32

O God, help me to recognize the real miracle of Christmas: that Jesus came to us as a child so that we might come to understand not only that nothing we do is insignificant but that every small thing we do has within it the power to change the world. *Amen.*

—Joan Chittister, OSB
Becoming Fully Human

TRANSFORMED BY YOUR WORD

SATURDAY, WEEK 3 — 1 CORINTHIANS 9:16

O God, help me to sincerely, generously and warmly welcome your Word, the Gospel, within myself. Let me incarnate your Word in myself, allowing myself to be molded by it, taking it seriously because there is not one second that I have the right to let your Word lie dormant in me. *Amen.*

—Madeline Delbrêl
We, the Ordinary People of the Streets

SEND US YOUR SPIRIT

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT — LUKE 10:21

Lord Jesus, I thank you that you have revealed to us the depths of your boundless love. Send us your Holy Spirit so that we may experience the healing and liberating power of life in union with you and that we may play our part in lightening the suffering of others. *Amen.*

—Bernard Haring, CSSR
in Journey to the Light: Spirituality as We Mature

YOU ARE NEAR

MONDAY, CHRISTMAS WEEK — ISAIAH 55:6

O God, as Christmas draws near, it is easy to forget your nearness as I rush around with many last-minute preparations. I need to slow down and recognize the opportunity to sense your nearness. Let me look for signs of your nearness as I complete Christmas preparations and enter into the joy of the season. *Amen.*

—Joyce Rupp, OSM
Inviting God In

SILENCE BEFORE THE MYSTERY

TUESDAY, CHRISTMAS WEEK — PSALM 96:12-13

O Jesus, help me to live in day-to-day fidelity to mysteries I do not fully understand, to wait in hope, waiting for the mystery to unfold, going on doing ordinary things but all the time listening, learning, pondering,

growing and energetically serving—to be silent before the mystery. *Amen.*

—Maria Boulding, OSB
The Coming of God

LIVING TOGETHER IN PEACE

WEDNESDAY, CHRISTMAS WEEK — MATTHEW 25:37-40

O God, let me see that the resources hidden in your earth are for feeding each other, healing each other, offering shelter to each other, making this world a place where men, women and children of all races and nations can live together in peace. Lord, make haste to help us. Do not come too late! *Amen.*

—Henri J.M. Nouwen
Seeds of Hope: A Henri Nouwen Reader

WITNESSING TO YOUR PRESENCE

THURSDAY, CHRISTMAS WEEK — PSALM 77:11

O God, help me not to grow lazy in the faith but to perceive, ever anew, the marvels that you work for us. Help me to become a living sign of the presence of Christ in the world, to witness and help open the hearts and minds of many to the desire for God and for true life, life without end. *Amen.*

—Pope Benedict XVI

WITNESSES TO YOUR LOVE

FRIDAY, CHRISTMAS WEEK — PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11

Lord Jesus, whom we contemplate in the poverty of Bethlehem, make us witnesses to your love, that love which led you to strip yourself of divine glory, in order to be born among us and die for us. You, O Prince of peace, you, O Savior born for us, be with your Church on the road which stretches before us into the future!
Amen.

—Pope St. John Paul II

SHARING THE MYSTERY OF CHRISTMAS

SATURDAY, CHRISTMAS WEEK — LUKE 2:8-14

Child of Bethlehem, grant that we may share with all our hearts in this profound mystery of Christmas. Put into our hearts this peace for which we sometimes seek so desperately and which you alone can give us. Help us know one another better, and live as brothers and sisters, children of the same Father. *Amen.*

—Pope St. John XXIII



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JESUS, OUR PEACE

CHRISTMAS — TITUS 3:4-7

O Jesus, help me to accept, with total openness of spirit, you who for love made yourself my brother. You came to bring to the world the gift of peace, which is the precious gift of Christmas. You are my true peace. You knock at my heart to grant me peace—peace of the soul. May I dedicate myself each day to building in every situation an authentic culture of encounter and peace. *Amen.*

—Pope Francis

