



Created
FOR LOVE

PRAYING THROUGH ADVENT WITH
ST. MOTHER TERESA

INTRODUCTION

St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta (1910-1997), founder of the Missionaries of Charity and the most well known Catholic woman of the 20th century, was canonized on September 16, 2016. In 1946, on the train to Darjeering, India, she “heard the call to give up all and follow Jesus into the slums to serve him among the poorest of the poor. I knew it was his will, and that I had to follow him.”

As she learned through the years:

“God will use you to accomplish great things on the condition that you believe much more in God’s love than in your weakness. Just once, let the love of God take entire and absolute possession of your heart. Let your heart suffer nothing contrary to enter. Let it apply itself continually to increase this love of God by seeking to please God in all things and refusing God nothing. Let it accept as from God’s hand everything that happens to it—and such a heart will pray continually. These are only the first steps toward prayer, but if we never make the first step with determination, we will not reach the last one: the presence of God.”

Mother Teresa’s words also reveal what Advent is all about. We hope that her prayers and the suggested scripture passages will help you give yourself fully to God and through prayer deepen your sense of God’s presence all around you during this Advent season.

GIVE ME YOUR GIFTS

1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT — JAMES 1:17

Dear Lord, the Great Healer, I kneel before you, since every perfect gift must come from you. I pray, give skill to my hands, clear vision to my mind, kindness and meekness to my heart.

I RELY ON YOU

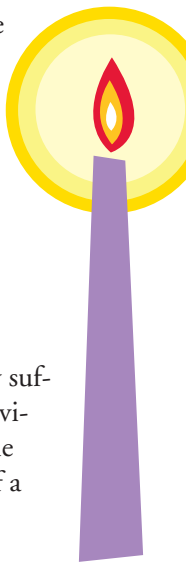
MONDAY, WEEK 1 — LUKE 18:17

Dear Lord, give me singleness of purpose, strength to lift up a part of the burden of my suffering fellowmen, and a realization of the privilege that is mine. Take from my heart all guile and worldliness, that with the simple faith of a child, I may rely on you.

PUT ON KINDNESS

TUESDAY, WEEK 1 — COLOSSIANS 1:12-13

O God, help me to be the loving expression of your kindness: kindness in my eyes, kindness in my face, kindness in my smile, kindness in my warm greetings. We are all but your instruments who do our little bit and pass by. I believe that the way in which an act of kindness is done is as important as the action itself.



SERVE OTHERS JOYFULLY

WEDNESDAY, WEEK 1 — MATTHEW 20:26-28

Make us worthy, Lord, to serve our fellow human beings throughout the world who live and die in poverty and hunger. Give them through our hands this day their daily bread and by our understanding love. Give them peace and joy.

MY WORK IS YOURS

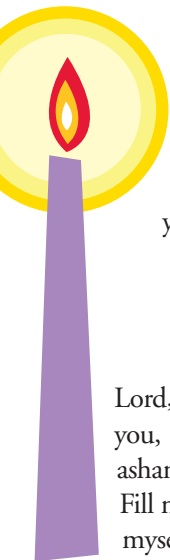
THURSDAY, WEEK 1 — PHILIPPIANS 4:13

Jesus, I do my best. I spend myself. But I am more than convinced that the work is not mine. I do not doubt that it was you who called me, with so much love and force. It was you, I know. That is why the work is yours.

FILL ME WITH LOVE

FRIDAY, WEEK 1 — JOHN 14:23

Lord, when I hear how others praise and pray to you, giving themselves to you without reserve, I am ashamed of my own misgivings and half-heartedness. Fill me with such love for you that I may long to give myself to you too.



HERE I AM LORD

SATURDAY, WEEK 1— ISAIAH 6:8

Lord, let the lesser loves of everyday life take their proper place in my affections, leaving you first. Here I am, Lord, body, heart and soul. Grant that with your love I may be big enough to reach the world and small enough to be at one with you.

BEGIN AGAIN TODAY

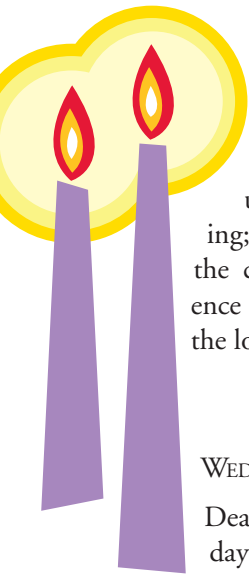
2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT — ROMANS 12:2

Jesus, help me every day to renew my resolution and to rouse myself to fervor, as if it were the first day of my conversion. Help me, Lord God, in my good resolve and in your holy service, and give me grace this very day really and truly to begin, for what I have done till now is nothing.

STAY WITH US

MONDAY, WEEK 2 — LUKE 24:29

Jesus, let others look up and see no longer us, but only you. Stay with us and then we shall begin to shine as you shine, to shine so as to be a light to others. The light, O Jesus, will be all from you; none of it will be ours. It will be you, shining on others through us.



LET MY LIGHT SHINE

TUESDAY, WEEK 2 — MATTHEW 5:16

Jesus, let us praise you in the way you love best—by shining on those around us. Let us preach you without preaching; not by words but by our example; by the catching force, the sympathetic influence of what we do; the evident fullness of the love our hearts bear to you.

LET US SEE YOU

WEDNESDAY, WEEK 2 — MATTHEW 25:37-40

Dearest Lord, may I see you today and every day in the person of your sick, and, while nursing them, minister to you. Though you hide yourself behind the unattractive disguise of the irritable, the exacting, the unreasonable, may I still recognize you, and say, “Jesus, my patient, how sweet it is to serve you.”

LISTEN TO JESUS

THURSDAY, WEEK 2 — MARK 9:7

Jesus, you are always waiting for us in silence. In this silence you listen to us and speak to our souls. And there, we hear your voice. Interior silence is very difficult, but

we must make the effort to pray. In this silence we find a new energy and a real unity as your energy becomes ours and our thoughts are united with your thoughts, our prayers with your prayers, our actions with your actions, our life with your life.

MY SMALL CONTRIBUTION

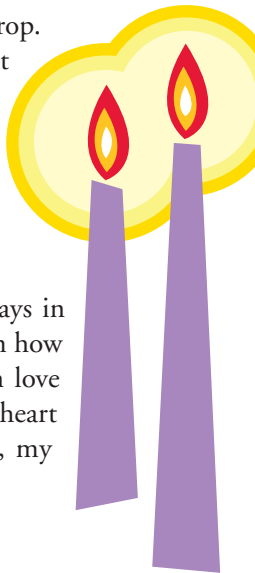
FRIDAY, WEEK 2 — MARK 12:42-44

Jesus, I feel that what I am doing is just a drop in the ocean. But if that drop was not there, I think the ocean would be less by that missing drop. Help me not to think in numbers but only to love one person at a time, to serve one person at a time.

SPEAK, LORD

SATURDAY, WEEK 2 — 1 SAMUEL 3:9

Let the sound of your voice echo always in my ears, good Jesus, so that I may learn how my heart, my mind, and my soul can love you. Let the innermost recesses of my heart embrace you, my one and only good, my sweet joy, my true friend.



YOU ALONE ARE LIFE

3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT — JOHN 14:6

Jesus, empty and transform me and afterwards fill the chalice of my heart to the brim, that I may give of my abundance. Help me seek you trustfully without looking back, without fear. Help me believe that you and you alone are life. Help me serve you, casting aside and forgetting all that troubles or worries me.

DO WITH ME WHAT YOU WANT

MONDAY, WEEK 3 — 1 CORINTHIANS 3:21-23

O God, I know that to be holy does not mean to do extraordinary things, to understand big things, but it is a simple acceptance, because I have given myself to you, because I belong to you—my total surrender. You could put me here or put me there. You can use me or not use me. It doesn't matter because I belong so totally to you that you can do just what you want to do with me.

PRAYING FROM THE HEART

TUESDAY, WEEK 3 — MATTHEW 6:6-8

O God, I know that prayer is a two-way process: speaking and listening. You speak to us: we listen. We speak to you: you listen. You speak in the silence of our

hearts, and we listen. And then we speak to you from the fullness of our hearts, and you listen. Our words are useless unless they come from the bottom of our heart.

YOU ARE MY JOY

WEDNESDAY, WEEK 3

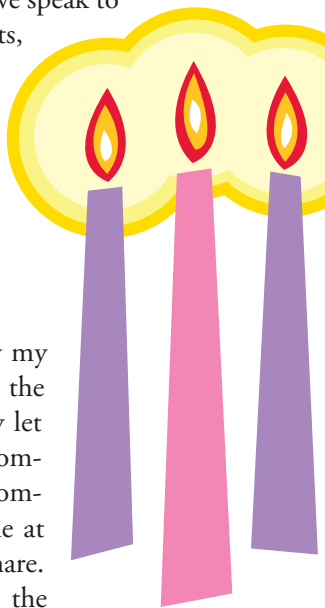
— ISAIAH 51:3

Lord, renew my spirit and draw my face into smiles of delight at the richness of your blessings. Daily let my eyes smile at the care and companionship of my family and community. Daily let my heart smile at the joys and sorrows that we share. Daily let my mouth smile with the laughter and rejoicing in your works. Daily let my face give testimony to the gladness you give me. Thank you for this gift.

ALL I HAVE IS YOURS

THURSDAY, WEEK 3 — 1 PETER 4:10-11

O God, sometimes I feel afraid, for I have nothing—no brains, no learning, no qualities required for such a work—and yet my heart is free from everything and



so it belongs completely to you, and you alone. You can use me just as it will please you best. To please you alone is the joy I seek.

LET US SHARE YOUR JOY

FRIDAY, WEEK 3 — 1 THESSALONIANS 2:8

We entreat you, O Lord, to turn your face toward us and protect us on our journey. Guide us in bringing your Good News to all whom we meet; and let us greet the poor and the afflicted with kindness and compassion. Mary, Our Mother, keep us safe and send us joy as we travel in the paths of the Lord.

YOUR LOVE IS BOUNDLESS

SATURDAY, WEEK 3 — EPHESIANS 3:14-18

O God, I surrender to you my free will, my reason, my own life in pure faith. My soul may be in darkness. Trial is the surest way of my blind surrender. Surrender is also true love. The more I surrender to you, the more I love you and others. There is no limit to your love. It is without measure and its depth cannot be sounded.

HELP US CHANGE THE WORLD

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT — 1 JOHN 3:14

O Jesus, lead me from death to life, from falsehood to truth, from despair to hope, from fear to truth, from hate to love, from war to peace.

We all have much to give, to share, to contribute wherever we find ourselves to be living. Holiness starts in the home, by loving you and those around us for your sake.



LET ME SHARE YOUR PEACE

MONDAY, CHRISTMAS WEEK
— JOHN 14:27

O God, let us use love and compassion to radiate your peace and extinguish in the world and in the hearts of all persons all hatred and love for power. Today, if we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other—that man, that woman, that child is my brother or my sister. If everyone could see your image in their neighbor, do you think we would still need tanks and generals?

BE WITH US ALWAYS

TUESDAY, CHRISTMAS WEEK — MATTHEW 1:23

Jesus, help me listen in silence, because if my heart is full of other things I cannot hear your voice. But when I have listened to your voice in the stillness of my heart, then my heart is filled with you. Then I can hear you

everywhere: in the closing of a door, in the person who needs me, in the birds that sing, in the flowers and the animals—that silence which is wonder and praise.



LOVE AS JESUS DID

WEDNESDAY, CHRISTMAS WEEK
— JOHN 14:12-14

O Loving Father, here I am, at your disposal, your child. Use me to continue your loving the world, by giving Jesus to me and through me to others and to the world. Let us pray for each other that we allow Jesus

to love in us and through us with the love with which you love us.

STRENGTHEN OUR FAMILIES

THURSDAY, CHRISTMAS WEEK — LUKE 2:51-52

Heavenly Father, you have given us the model of life in the holy family of Nazareth. Help us to make our family another Nazareth where love, peace and joy reign. May it be deeply contemplative, intensely eucharistic, revived with joy. Help us to stay together in joy and sorrow in family prayer.

LOVE AND FORGIVE

FRIDAY, CHRISTMAS WEEK — COLOSSIANS 3:14-17

Loving Father, teach us to see Jesus in the members of our families, especially in their distressing disguise. May the eucharistic heart of Jesus make our hearts humble like his and help us to carry out our family duties in a holy way. 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 us to take whatever you give and give whatever you take with a big smile.

I GIVE MYSELF TO YOU

SATURDAY, CHRISTMAS WEEK — 1 CORINTHIANS 1:26-29

O God, I give myself completely to you, because you have given yourself to us. If you owe nothing to us and

are ready to impart yourself to us, shall we answer with just a fraction of ourselves? Therefore to possess you we must allow you to possess our souls. How poor we would be if you had not given us the power of giving ourselves to you. How rich we are now.





Sources from which Mother Teresa's
prayers were taken and adapted:

Come Be My Light (New York: Doubleday, 2007). *Everything Starts from Prayer* (Ashland OR: White Cloud Press, 1998). *The Love of Christ* (New York: Harper & Row, 1982). *A Simple Path* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1995). *At Prayer with Mother Teresa* by Eileen Egan (Liguori, 1998). *The Joy in Loving*, ed. Jaya Chalika and Edward Lee Joly (New York: Penguin Books, 2000).

CREATED FOR LOVE

CHRISTMAS DAY — TITUS 2:11-14

Jesus, we have been created in your image, to love and be loved, and then you have become human to make it possible for us to love as you loved us. You make yourself the hungry one—the naked one—the homeless one—the sick one—the imprisoned one—the lonely one—the unwanted one—and you say: You did it to me. You are hungry for our love. Help us hunger always for your love.

