

OPEN OUR HEARTS
to
God

PRAYING THROUGH
ADVENT WITH

Pope Francis



INTRODUCTION

Advent invites us to prepare our hearts for Christ's coming—not only at Christmas, but each day in our lives. Pope Francis, whose legacy continues to inspire the Church after his passing, urged us to seek a daily encounter with Jesus, guided by the Holy Spirit.

In *The Joy of the Gospel*, he wrote:

“I invite all Christians to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ... Whenever we take a step towards Jesus, we come to realize that he is already there, waiting for us with open arms.”

This collection of daily prayers by Pope Francis helps us open our hearts to God's presence, listen more deeply to his Word, and welcome Jesus with joy.

CHANGE OUR HEARTS

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT | MATTHEW 16:24

O God, in this time leading up to the celebration of Jesus' birth, teach us to go against the current: to strip ourselves, to be humble and giving, to listen and be silent, to go out of ourselves, granting space to your beauty, the source of true joy.



YOU SHALL BE HOLY

MONDAY, WEEK 1 | LEVITICUS 11:45

O God, awaken in all of us a renewed desire for holiness. May the splendor of truth shine forth in our words, the song of charity resound in our works, purity and chastity abide in our hearts and bodies, and the full beauty of the gospel be evident in our lives.

LISTEN TO MY VOICE

TUESDAY, WEEK 1 | JEREMIAH 11:14

O Holy Spirit, help us always to heed the Lord's voice. May we never be indifferent to the cry of the poor or untouched by the sufferings of the sick and those in need. May we be sensitive to the loneliness of the elderly and the vulnerability of children, and always love and cherish the life of every human being.

YOU ARE ALREADY NEAR

WEDNESDAY, WEEK 1 | REVELATION 3:20

O Jesus, open our ears to hear God's word and to recognize God's voice and call. Awaken in us a desire to follow in your footsteps. Help us recognize how many times you come into our lives and how many times we don't notice because we are so immersed in our own thoughts, in our own affairs and even, in these days, in our Christmas preparations. Help us notice you who come and knock at the door of our hearts, asking for acceptance.

WE ARE ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

THURSDAY, WEEK 1 | 1 JOHN 3:2

Lord, God of Abraham, God of the Prophets, God of Love, you created us and you call us to live as brothers and sisters. Give us the strength daily to be instruments of peace. Enable us to see everyone who crosses our path as our brother or sister.



YOU CAN CHANGE US

FRIDAY, WEEK 1 | JOHN 10:27

O Jesus, you call us by name. In the depths of our hearts, let us listen to your voice. Let us welcome you with joy. You can change us, you can transform our stony hearts into hearts of flesh. You can free us from selfishness and make our lives a gift of love.

BE WITH US ALWAYS

SATURDAY, WEEK 1 | MATTHEW 28:20

O God, remind us that those who believe are never alone. Teach us to see all things with the eyes of Jesus, that he may be the light for our path that never fades. May this light always increase in us and in our daily life, in our family and at our work. May we share the joy of the faith, which is expressed in charity, in benevolence and in tenderness.



YOU ARE OUR LIGHT

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT | JOHN 8:12



O Jesus, help us never to forget the meaning of our earthly journey. May the kindly light of faith illumine our days, the comforting power of hope direct our steps, the contagious warmth of love stir our hearts. And may our gaze be fixed on God, in whom true joy is found.

GIVE US PEACE

MONDAY, WEEK 2 | JOHN 14:27

Lord, defuse the violence of our tongues and our hands. Renew our hearts and minds, so that the word which always brings us together will be “brother and sister,” and our way of life will always be that of shalom, peace, salaam!

GIVE US EARS TO HEAR

TUESDAY, WEEK 2 | COLOSSIANS 3:16-17

O God, open our ears and teach us how to listen to the word of your son Jesus among the thousands of words of this world. Grant that we may listen to the reality in which we live, to every person we encounter, especially those who are poor, in need, in hardship.

SAY “YES” TO GOD

WEDNESDAY, WEEK 2 | LUKE 1:38

Mary, virgin and mother, you who, moved by the Holy Spirit, welcomed the word of life in the depths of your humble faith. As you gave yourself completely to the Eternal One, help us to say our own “yes” to the urgent call, as pressing as ever, to proclaim the good news of Jesus.

BE DOERS OF THE WORD

THURSDAY, WEEK 2 | JAMES 1:22

O Jesus, give us greater courage in witnessing to our faith in you. Let us not be afraid of being Christian and living as Christians, to have the courage to go and proclaim the good news and to live and to witness to our faith by prayer, by works of charity, by promoting justice, by doing good.



DRAW US BACK TO YOU

FRIDAY, WEEK 2 | EPHESIANS 1:7

O God, you never forget us but watchfully and lovingly wait to see the desire to return home to be reborn in our hearts. And when you see this desire, even simply hinted at and so often almost unconsciously, immediately you are with us, and by your forgiveness you light up the path of conversion and return.

MY CONSECRATION

SATURDAY, WEEK 2 | PSALM 96:8

Mary, to you I consecrate my intentions, that they may ever dwell on the love that you merit. To you I consecrate my tongue that it may ever praise you and spread your devotion. To you I consecrate my heart, that, after God, I may love you above all things.



BRING JOY TO OUR LIVES

THIRD 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.



OPEN OUR HEARTS TO JESUS

MONDAY, WEEK 3 | HEBREWS 4:12

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 our hearts to enter and grant us peace, peace of the soul. Let us open our hearts to you!

NO MORE DIVISION

TUESDAY WEEK 3 | 1 CORINTHIANS 1:10

Lord, grant that we be more and more united, never to be instruments of division. Enable us to commit ourselves, as the beautiful Franciscan prayer says, to sowing love where there is hatred; where there is injury, pardon; and union where there is discord.

YOU ARE WAITING FOR US

WEDNESDAY, WEEK 3 | ISAIAH 30:18

O God, you are love, you are waiting for us, you are our Father, who is good and loves us as a true father loves, who loves us truly and forgives us as the Holy Spirit tells us in our hearts. Let us listen to the Holy Spirit and move forward on the path of love, mercy and forgiveness.

SHARE THE LIGHT OF THE GOSPEL

THURSDAY WEEK 3 | 2 CORINTHIANS 4:6

O God, illuminate our minds and our hearts, so that we may obey, unhesitatingly, the word of your son Jesus. Give us the courage to decide not to let ourselves be dragged along, letting others direct our life. Move our hands and feet toward others, to bring them the love of your son Jesus, to bring the light of the gospel to the world.



SHOW US YOUR PEACE

FRIDAY, WEEK 3 | COLOSSIANS 3:15

Prince of Peace, help us! May you grant us peace, teach us peace, guide us toward peace. Open our eyes and our hearts and grant us the courage to say: “no more war!” Make us willing to listen to the cry of our citizens who ask that our weapons be transformed into instruments of peace, our fears to trust and our tensions to forgiveness.

GIVE ME STRENGTH

SATURDAY, WEEK 3 | 1 PETER 4:11

Bless me, heavenly helper, and through your powerful intercession, give me strength in my weakness, so that, by serving you faithfully in this life, I may praise you, love you and give you thanks in heaven, for all eternity.





GUIDE US, HOLY SPIRIT

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

LUKE 21:36

O Holy Spirit, guard our life with your embrace. Bless and strengthen every desire for good. Give new life and nourishment to our faith, sustain

and enlighten our hope, awaken and animate our charity, guide us all on the path to holiness.

GATHER US ALL

MONDAY, CHRISTMAS WEEK | JAMES 4:8

O God, teach us your own special love for the little and the poor, for the excluded and the suffering, for sinners and the wounded of heart. Gather all people under your protection and give us all to your beloved son, Jesus.

HEAR AND FOLLOW ME

TUESDAY, CHRISTMAS WEEK | 2 CORINTHIANS 1:12

O God, help us to become increasingly men and women of conscience, free in our conscience, because it is in the conscience that dialogue with you takes place. Help us become men and women who can hear your voice and follow it with determination, who can listen to your voice, and follow it with decision.

IN YOU IS OUR SALVATION

WEDNESDAY, CHRISTMAS WEEK | ISAIAH 9:6

O God, hasten our steps to Bethlehem, to encounter the child who is born for us, for the salvation and joy of all people. Enlighten our hearts, that we may recognize in the infant Jesus, born in Bethlehem of the virgin Mary, the salvation given by God to each one of us, to each man and woman and to all the peoples of the earth. Give us the grace to live the joy of the gospel in our families, at work, in the parish and everywhere. Grant us this grace in these last days of Advent.

JESUS REVEALS THE FACE OF GOD

THURSDAY, CHRISTMAS WEEK | JOHN 14:9

Let us give glory to God, who is good, faithful and merciful. Today may we all come to know the true face of God, the Father who has given us Jesus, and feel God's closeness, live in his presence, love him and adore him. May we feel God's presence beside us, his mercy and also his help.



HELP US TO BE LIKE YOU

FRIDAY, CHRISTMAS WEEK | LUKE 10:21

We thank you Jesus for revealing yourself not as one who remains on high and dominates the universe, but as the one who bends down, descends to the little and poor earth. Help us to be like you, not putting ourselves above others, but indeed lowering ourselves, placing ourselves at the service of others, becoming small with the small and poor with the poor.

MAY WE FIND YOU IN OUR FAMILIES

SATURDAY, CHRISTMAS WEEK | EPHESIANS 3:14-19

Holy Family of Nazareth, help us make room for Jesus who is coming, welcome him in our family, in each member: children, husband, wife, grandparents. Grant that our families too may be places of communion and prayer, authentic schools of the gospel and small domestic churches. Jesus is there.



O merciful God, you are love,
you are waiting for us, you are our Father,
who is good and loves us as a true father loves
and always pardons and receives us
into your love of forgiveness and mercy.

May your Church always be
a place of mercy and hope,
where all feel welcomed, loved, forgiven
and encouraged to live according to the Gospel.

Let us give glory to God,
who is good, faithful and merciful.
Today may we all come to know the true face of God,
feel God's closeness, live in his presence,
love him, adore him and feel his mercy.

—*Pope Francis*



A CHRISTMAS BLESSING

CHRISTMAS DAY | LUKE 2:10-12

On this day, illuminated by the gospel hope which springs from the humble stable of Bethlehem, I invoke the Christmas gift of joy and peace upon all: upon children and the elderly, upon young people and families, the poor and the marginalized. May Jesus, who was born for us, console all those afflicted by illness and suffering. May he sustain those who devote themselves to serving our brothers and sisters who are most in need. Happy Christmas to all!

