

Advent Prayer

God of love, your Son Jesus is your greatest gift to us. During these weeks of Advent help us to prepare for his coming through watchful waiting. Remove everything in our hearts that is an obstacle to us receiving Christ, and make us eager to welcome his coming with joy and thanksgiving. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord, **Amen**.

Second Sunday of Advent

04th December 2022

Scripture:

Isiah 11: 1 - 10

Matthew 3: 1 - 12

Reflection (Isiah 2: 1 -5)

On this second Sunday of Advent, we are drawn to the messianic prophecies from two different prophets, Isaiah and John the Baptist, with difference in orientation. While Isaiah speaks about a Messiah who would introduce a peaceful harmony in creation, John the Baptist, on the other hand, speaks of a Messiah who would come with spirit and fire and who would burn the chaff with unquenchable fire.

Although these two prophets give a different view about the Messianism of Christ, the message of Advent is that Christ is coming again. He is coming to bring peace. Upon those who are on the side of peace shall rest the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of wisdom, knowledge and understanding, but those who are not prepared to receive the loving peace of the Kingdom of God will only end up being treated like the chaff. Hence, we all, as Christians, have a choice; to be on the side of peace or not. Each choice however comes with responsibilities and consequences.

Fr Emmanuel Eyeowa CMF

Parish Priest (Delft) and University Chaplain (UWC)

Practical Suggestion

What choice do I make concerning my spiritual welfare? How often do I stand on the side of justice and peace? If Christ were to come here and now, what will I present him as the fruit of my labour?

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, you gave us your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ as a gift and sign of your love to the world, help us walk in the light of your love during these days of Advent. Help us to seek You always even in the midst of adversities, that at the coming of Jesus our Saviour, we may rejoice to reign with you in eternity, through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Monday

05th December 2022

Second Week of Advent

Opening Prayer

Scripture:

Luke 5: 17 -26

Reflection

Then astonishment seized them all and they glorified God, and, struck with awe, they said, "We have seen incredible things today."

What astonished you today? When were you last struck with awe when witnessing the works of the Lord in and around you? Would you go as far as professing with your lips and acknowledge the works of Christ? "We have seen incredible things today."

Today, I witnessed a miracle. As I stopped for a traffic light that had just turned red at a major intersection, my car was right in front, on the left lane. As I looked through the rear mirror, there came an old Mercedes-Benz at a high speed, on the right lane, and I could see that it was not going to stop. The other cars were getting ready to go on a green light, and there was a runner about to cross the road. I panicked so much that I screamed "Oh no. Jesus!". Luckily the other cars, including the car that was turning on to the same lane as the speeding car, managed to stop on time, and the runner was slightly delayed. What could have been a bad incident was avoided. I was in awe of this miracle. I thanked God for lives saved from the reckless driver, and indeed I have seen incredible things today. Praise be to God.

Barbara Magongoa

St John the Evangelist (Fish Hoek and Sun Valley)

Practical Suggestion

Who are you in today's Scriptural passage? The one who picks up the stretcher to take the sick to Jesus? Do you pray for those who are sick and unable? Do you bring them to Jesus? Are you the one that is carried to Jesus by good praying friends and family? Are you among the crowd seeking healing? Are you the one questioning Jesus' works? Are you in awe and wonder of God's works of miracle and healing in our own lives and with others?

Closing Prayer

Dear Lord, during this time of waiting, please open our eyes to recognise your miracles in our lives, big and small. Give us the courage to praise in awe the holy name of Jesus above all names. Thank you Jesus. Amen

Tuesday

06th December 2022

St. Nicholas

Opening Prayer

Scripture:

Matthew 18: 12 -14

Reflection

The readings for today, December 6th bring us a message of hope. In the Old Testament reading (Isaiah 40: 1-11) Isaiah speaks of the coming Messiah "... in the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord." We know how Jesus suffered and was tempted in his time in this harsh environment and this is where we are encouraged to meet God ourselves and to become humble and confront that which is not right in our lives. Once we are able to do this we will draw comfort from the image in the last verse, of God as the shepherd 'who gathers the lambs in his arms'

In the New Testament, Matthew 18:12-14, we read the parable of the Good Shepherd. 'The shepherd leaves his flock of 99 sheep and goes in search of the one that went astray'. Jesus was teaching his disciples, to recognise their own sinfulness and that they should not despise other believers even when they appear to fall into sin.

The wonderful message of hope made so clear in this parable is that even when we are away from God, he will still search for us and once he finds us he will rejoice and carry us in his arms.

Angela van Assche
St Kizito Member

Practical Suggestion

Think of that one person in need, and reach out to them.

Closing Prayer

PRAYER TO THE GOOD SHEPHERD

O God, Shepherd of all your people, deliver us from all troubles, worries and cares that assail us. May we always do what is pleasing in your sight, and remain safe in the care of our Good Shepherd;
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Source: Paul C. Straman, based on a prayer from the Roman Breviary.

Wednesday

7th December 2022

Second Week of Advent

Opening Prayer

Scripture:

Matthew 11: 28 - 30

Reflection

Dearly beloved in Jesus Christ.

In the season of Advent, we start afresh with our new liturgical calendar. New challenges lie ahead and we look forward to the second coming of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

It is an opportunity to reflect upon: Where we are going? What is the road that we are to walk? How are we to proceed on our journey with this newness that only God can give us? (What is this newness that God wants to offer you this Advent?)

In today's readings we find comforting words such as: Come to me. I am

your God; I will refresh and strengthen you; I will be your God and you will be my people; I will hold you in the palm of my hand.

The Lord is compassionate and gracious. Our God cares of us. He knows our battles in life, and invites us to rest in his arms. Can we imagine this! Jesus calls us and says

“Come, and I will be your God and I will take away that heavy burden that you are carrying. I will give you my burden, which is light.”

Let us take up the invitation of our Lord, and share our stresses, our fears, our doubts, our burdens. Let us allow our God to help and take care of us

**Deacon Trevor Petersen
St Nicholas (Stellenbosch)**

Practical Suggestion

When we in need rest, where do we run? Where do we go to get rid of our burdens and stresses of life?

Do we share our stresses, our fears, our doubts and our burdens with our God? Do we take up His invitation and go to Him for help?

Closing Prayer

Lord, I come to You and I lay down my life and every burden before You. I give You my life, my hopes, my fears, my past, my future and everything that worries me. Jesus, I give You everything. Jesus, I trust in You. **Amen**

Source: catholic-daily-reflections.com

Thursday

Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

08th December 2022

Opening Prayer

Scripture:

Luke 1: 26 - 38

Reflection

When asked by family or friends, do we say 'Yes' to requests? Sometimes our reaction is to ask "Why are you asking me? Can't someone else do it?" This is often when we filled with fear and doubt of not being worthy.

Mary was initially surprised by the angel's visit, yet did not hesitate to say "Yes" Our response to do something in church, school or at home is often a 'No' as we too doubt our own abilities, fearful of making a mistake or embarrassing ourselves. The negative messages we receive from others and self often makes us feel this way. During this Advent Season let us have Mary's courage to say YES!

Mary remained faithful to God's request and gave birth to the most precious gift, Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

Laurian Kleinhans
Kolping South Africa

Practical Suggestion

Today, I will be courageous and say YES
YES to helping those in need!
YES to being more understanding towards others!
YES to believing more in ourselves!

Closing Prayer

Dear Lord, please help me always to be attentive to your requests and have the courage to say yes. Amen.

Friday
09th December 2022

Second Week of Advent

Opening Prayer

Scripture:

Matthew 11: 16 - 19

Reflection

When we pray – whether it be at Mass, praying the Liturgy of the Hours (Breviary), reciting prayers, or just talking to God conversationally – the focus usually tends to be on *us* doing all the talking. It is true that we all like to be heard. But by only doing the talking, we unfortunately neglect

(unconsciously) another arguably more important aspect of prayer – listening.

Today's first reading from Isaiah 48:17-19 hints strongly at the importance of listening: "If only you had *listened* to my commandments!..." and the fruits of that listening "your prosperity would be like a river ... your vindication like the waves of the sea ... your descendants like the sand ... their name never cut off or blotted out from my presence".

Prayer requires that we do as much listening – if not more! – than talking. Listening to God is not easy – so how do we hear what God is saying to us? It begins with the practice of Stillness, Silence, and Solitude – 'religiously' being still, silent and alone before God on a daily basis.

Stephen Docherty

Publications and Communication - Archdiocese of Cape Town

Practical Suggestion

Start with 10 to 20 minutes a day and let it grow from there. Over time you will begin to become familiar with God's whisperings deep within you. Of course, this practice is not easy and requires discipline. In the words of the modern mystic Etty Hillesum, "*There is a really deep well inside me. And in it dwells God. Sometimes I am there too. But more often stones and grit block the well, and God is buried beneath. Then he must be dug out again.*"

The book "Learn to Pray" from Redemptorist Pastoral Publications is a really helpful tool in teaching this – and other – ways of praying. It is available at <https://rpp.org.za/product/learn-to-pray/>

Reach down into the well deep within and spend time alone with God. The fruits of this 'listening' are well worth it.

Closing Prayer

Loving God, I pray for the grace to be disciplined to spend time – still, quiet and alone – with you each day, that I may begin to hear the gentle whisperings of your voice deep within. Speak to my heart and guide my life, that others may see in me the joy of knowing you. I ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Saturday
10th December 2022

Our Lady of Loreto

Opening Prayer

Scripture:

Matthew 17: 10 - 13

Reflection

The role of the returned Elijah was to pave the way for the coming of the Messiah, and that too is what John the Baptist did.

God's Old Testament promise has been fulfilled. John the Baptist was the promised Elijah while all the time pointing to Christ and paving the way for Him. Elijah and John spoke the truth in preparation for the coming of Christ and rekindled people's hopes. May we raise up a generation of our time as bearers of the truth this Advent and give to others the hope that they might need in their lives at this time.

This reading reveals to us that God is always true to his promises and is in complete control of everything and that we can be totally at peace no matter what happens.

Once again, let us see ourselves in the role of John, sharing with him the responsibility of preparing the way for Jesus to come into people's lives. And, like John and as disciples of Jesus, we too can expect to have to face challenges, opposition and perhaps hardships.

Brandon Abrahams
Youth Leader

Practical Suggestion

In my daily interaction with others, how am I an example to others to follow Christ?

Closing Prayer

Let us get to know your joy, peace, comfort, and love. Despite the world's distractions, and challenges may we be open to the experience of Our Lord's message of hope, faith and love. Amen