Week Three of Advent



Swipe for daily challenges, reflections, and scripture-based themes

DAY 15

Daily invitation, 12/13

Adults: Pray a full Rosary. Bonus if you do it with family members or friends.

Children: Ask your parents if they'll pray the Rosary with you.

Theme:
On Sundays during Advent, the Joyful Mysteries are traditionally prayed, allowing us to draw closer to Jesus and Mary through the events leading to his birth, the Nativity, and Jesus' early childhood.

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DAY 16

Daily invitation, 12/14

Adults: Spend 10 minutes in silent prayer.

Children: Think about your favorite saint or Bible character, find something you admire about them, and imagine yourself living like them.

Theme:
Today is the memorial of St. John of the Cross, a Doctor of the Church, carmelite friar, and mystic from the 16th century. Amid his busy life, he placed high value on silence and solitude. How can we slow down, invite silence into our lives, and let God stir in our hearts?

Trusting the Authority of Christ (Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a/Mt 21:23-27 [187])

DAY 17

Daily invitation, 12/15

Adults: Go work in the Lord's vineyard: volunteer, donate clothes or old items, or make a charitable donation to an organization with a focus on serving the poor.

Children: Say prayers for those who are hungry, and ask God to provide for them and their families.

Reflection:
In today's reading from Zephaniah, the nation of Israel embodied the first brother in the reading from the Gospel of Matthew: by achieving the humility required to repent from their sins, the people of Jerusalem, though initially rejecting God the Father's call to holiness, return to their father's work, tending a divinely weeded garden. However, those chosen by God must first achieve a disposition towards the divine that is humble enough to repent and receive his merciful love.

A Disposition of Humility to Achieve Repentance (Zep 3:1-2, 9-13/Mt 21:28-32 [188])

DAY 18

Daily invitation, 12/16

Adult: Read today's Mass reading, Isaiah 45:6-8, 18, 21-25, and think about a word or phrase that stood out to you.

Children: Read today's Mass reading with your parents and ask a question about what you read.

Reflection:
Isaiah's reading fully positions God as the creator of all things. By using a series of paradoxes, Isaiah reveals that God's purpose is in all things, even the darkness and woe, and he uses all things to achieve his purpose.

Christ as the Embodied Light Performs Miracles, or the Poor Have Good News Brought to Them (Is 45:6c-8, 18, 21c-25/Lk 7:18b-23 [189])

DAY 19

Daily invitation, 12/17

Adults: In the busyness of Advent, it can be easy to become distracted from the reality that Christ is the ruler of your life, to whom you owe obedience. However, Christ will never force your obedience but wait until you come to him freely. Reflect on: where have you made yourself your own ruler of your life? How can you give that part of your life back to God?

Children: One of God's commandments is to honor your father and mother. Where have you not honored your parents? Can you apologize for an action you regret?

Reflection:
Christ was a real person, who descended corporally from the genealogical staircase of Israelites to incarnate as a living, divine image, both fully man and fully God, with full authority as priest, prophet, and king. Descended from Judah, whom the reading from Genesis reminds us was given the "the scepter [which] shall not depart," Christ has earthly authority to rule over all things and all peoples.

Christ is a Real Person, and that Real Person is King (Gn 49:2, 8-10/Mt 1:1-17 [193])

DAY 20

Daily invitation, 12/18

Adults: Based on what you contemplated on Thursday, December 17, find one way to act out that obedience to the Lord by giving something up this Friday, whether it's meat, social media, television, sweets, or another delight you typically enjoy daily.

Children: Skip one special treat this Friday and say a prayer for someone who is sick.

Theme:
Today's readings show how God moves among his people to direct history through his word. It was Joseph's obedience to the angel of the Lord who appeared in his dream that continued the Gospel story.

Acting out the obedience (Jer 23:5-8/Mt 1:18-25 [194])

DAY 21

Daily invitation, 12/19

Adults: In the Gospel, Elizabeth says that, through God's blessing, he has removed the disgrace from her. Contemplate a disgrace that wounds your relationship with God. Go to the sacrament of Reconciliation, or prepare to bring it before God in tomorrow's Mass.

Children: If you've received the sacrament of Reconciliation, ask your parents if they can take you to confession. If not, pray for five minutes and tell God why you love him and what you're grateful for.

Theme:
There is nothing that God cannot do, and he uses all things to bring his followers closer to him. He chooses each person for a specific reason to carry out a specific purpose in the story he is telling, and all purposes are one with the incarnation and life of Christ. As Manoah's wife and Elizabeth were barren but were blessed by God with children endowed with divine purpose, so are all things created with a purpose from God.

Acting out the obedience (Jer 23:5-8/Mt 1:18-25 [194])