

Advent Faith Conversations:

The Second Week of Advent

"Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths."

-- From this week's Sunday Gospel: Mark 1:1-8



Adult reflection for this week

This week, the theme of our Sunday readings calls us to *prepare* for Jesus' coming. While there's overlap from last week, this is another facet: first, consciousness, and now *active preparation*. Oh, we're usually active alright this time of year! But don't be fooled. What if the *active* part was actually about quieting ourselves and practicing an interior posture to receive? A letting go, so that *God himself can actively prepare* the way, his way, in our hearts. . . and through us, to the world?

Family daily conversation and prayer starters

Darken the room and light two purple candles, saying, "Jesus, you are the Light of the World." Everyone responds, "Let your light shine in our darkness." After each day's conversation, pray the prayer together on the second page (print so everyone has a mini-sheet) and sing "O Come, O Come Emmanuel."

Sunday, December 6

What kinds of things do we *prepare* for? (tests, games, meals, meetings, vacations, guests, etc.) What actions are involved? What "in-actions" get us ready? (resting, clearing our minds to focus, listening, etc.) *After the prayer, add: St. Nicholas, pray for us.*

Monday, December 7

Preparation is gradual. Do you like the process or do you wish you could get right to the "event"? How does the outcome, or your experience of the "event" depend on your preparation beforehand? *After the prayer, add: St. Ambrose, pray for us.*

Tuesday, December 8

Wise preparation starts with the end in mind. What is the "end goal" of Advent? Of life? How does this guide our preparations? How was Mary prepared and how did she prepare for Jesus? *After the prayer, add: Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us.*

Wednesday, December 9

Sit in the dark a minute. What does it make you think and feel? (*Now light the candles.*) We often think of darkness as something scary, lonely, and to be avoided. When is it helpful? What can we learn from it? (Appreciating light, heightening awareness, learning to trust, rest, etc.) Jesus is the Light, but we can also find him when in darkness. *After the prayer, add: St. Juan Diego, pray for us.*

Thursday, December 10

In Sunday's 2nd reading, St. Peter speaks of preparing for Jesus' 2nd coming in terms of "what sort of persons ought you to be." Have you thought about "preparation" not so much as *doing to accomplish*, but *being*. . .? To *be* a sort of person? What sort?

Friday, December 11

In week 1 we talked about Advent being about remembering Jesus' coming at Christmas. How can we *prepare* to receive him? What *actions* could we take? Who should we *be* (become) as we await his coming . . . in a manger and in our hearts and home?

Saturday, December 12

In week 1 we talked about God's coming to us each day (through Scripture, people, a sense of his presence, Communion, etc.), but often, we don't notice him. What mountains need leveling so we can see him - less pride, noise, fear. . .? What valleys need filling so we can welcome him - more mercy, trust, kindness. . .? *After the prayer, add: Our Lady of Guadalupe, pray for us.*

Print and cut one out for each family member.

Week 2 Prayer

Merciful God, use our daily circumstances to make us the sort of people that see and welcome your coming. *You* prepare the way in our hearts, in your way. Amen.

Sing together:

O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free
Thine own from Satan's tyranny
From depths of hell Thy people save
And give them victory o'er the grave.

Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel

O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night
And death's dark shadows put to flight.
(Refrain)

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