

Advent Faith Conversations:

The Second Week of Advent

Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.
-- From this week's Sunday Gospel: Luke 3:1-6



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 5

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.) *Are you putting shoes out for St. Nicholas' tomorrow?*

Monday, December 6

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. Nicholas, pray for us.*

Tuesday, December 7

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. Ambrose, pray for us.*

Wednesday, 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.*

Thursday, December 9

In Sunday's 2nd reading, St. Paul speaks of preparing for Jesus' 2nd coming "confident. . . that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it." Have you thought about "preparation" not so much as *your* work, but rather *God's* work in you? To help you to *be. . . become. . .* who he made you to be? How can we do this? *After the prayer, add: St. Juan Diego, pray for us.*

Friday, December 10

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 gorges need filling so we can welcome him - more mercy, trust, kindness. . .? How can we better recognize and prepare for his coming to us each day?

Saturday, December 11

God always works in/for the individual, but in the context of a people, a community. His coming is not just for us, but for the whole world. How can we prepare the way for his coming into the lives of those around us — those who know him and those who don't?



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Week 2 Prayer

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

Sing together:

O come, O come, Thou Lord of Might
Who to Thy tribes, on Sinai's height
In ancient times didst give the law
In cloud, and majesty and awe.

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

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.
(Refrain)

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