

BOSTON MOUNTAIN YOUTH RANCH

Advent

A DEVOTIONAL GUIDE
FOR THE CHRISTMAS SEASON





Advent Guide

Daily Readings for Advent



What is Advent?

Advent means "arrival" and signifies the start of an event or the arrival of a person. In Christian communities around the world, Advent refers to a four-week season of remembering and celebrating the arrival of Jesus on Earth.

This Advent guide is meant to be a simple and easy way to be mindful as you navigate the days and weeks leading up to the celebration of Christ's birth. Each page has a short daily reflection, a Jesse Tree reading, and some age-specific suggestions for families with children.

Nativity

You can make or invest in a simple, child-friendly nativity scene to display in your home, there is a printable set included if you want a simple, easy way to provide one for your child. This hands-on experience helps familiarize children with the story of how Jesus came into the world, and can also provide opportunities for them to ask questions. Children can move Mary and Joseph closer to the stable each Sunday in Advent.



The Advent Wreath

A central focus point of Advent is the Advent wreath. It is usually circular with three purple candles and one pink candle. The first purple candle – the Prophet’s Candle – will be lit on the first Sunday of Advent, followed by the purple Bethlehem Candle, the pink Shepherd’s Candle and the purple Angel Candle. Purple is a liturgical color used to signify a time of prayer. Pink or rose is the liturgical color for joy.

You can purchase a wreath, make one from branches from your yard or cardboard tubes or other craft materials you have. We have included a paper wreath in our printed materials that you can cut out with your children if you want to keep things really simple. *Another tip is to use flameless candles to keep young children safe.

We recommend that you gather up your daily devotional supplies, which includes this guide, the advent wreath (candles, if you are going to use them), a nativity set (we have included a printable set), and whichever Bible translation you would like to use for the readings.



The Jesse Tree

The Jesse Tree tells of God's plan from the beginning of time to redeem His people by sending a Savior. It follows the lineage of Christ's family and key people in the Old Testament that God uses to tell His story beginning with Creation and going through Christ's birth. It serves as a countdown to Christmas by reading a story and depicting the story with an ornament that acts as a symbol and visual reminder of the story. Through this tradition, children (and adults) can make connections between the Old and New Testaments to see God's perfect plan to bring us back to himself through Jesus.

The Jesse Tree is a way of getting to know the big picture of God's narrative for us and a practice of remembering that God is here, that He speaks to us, and that He loves us deeply. Decorating a tree with the accompanying ornaments brings an element of fun in celebrating the tradition. This can be done ahead of time, or it can be done on the second day as a way to reflect the creativity we possess as a people made in God's image.

The printable set of ornaments can be cut out, and hung on a tree or set up in a display. They can be used as-is, or you can have your kids color and decorate them. If you want an added element of fun, you could "wrap" up the ornaments and open one daily in place of, or alongside, an Advent calendar.

We've included a short program you can use each day, which includes suggested bible passages, question prompts, and a song to sing as a family. We've found that keeping things simple is the easiest way to stick with the daily practice, so feel free to use as much or as little as you have time and energy for. Our hope and prayer is that you feel connected to God this holiday season as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

Your daily flow can begin with lighting the Advent wreath, followed by a reading of the day's Jesse Tree story and ending with a song for the day. For older children you can also have a further discussion using the questions suggested in the guide.

Recommended Resources:

Bible - for younger kids, we have suggestions for using the Jesus Storybook Bible (which is great for all ages!), and the God's Story for Me children's bible. The Action Bible is a great resource for older kids, bringing the stories alive in a comic-book style collection. The Message by Eugene Peterson is also a great choice for kids and teens to better relate to the passages in a modern paraphrased presentation.



Hope

Week One: The Prophet's Candle



Beginning today, we light the candles of the Advent wreath. There are traditionally three purple candles, one pink candle, and a white candle. The three purple candles lit for the first three weeks of advent symbolize the royalty of Christ. The candle for the fourth week is pink, changing to a lighter tone, one that whispers of Christ's coming birth. The final candle for Christmas day is white. Each day this week, one single purple candle is lit.

Isaiah 9:2-6

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder. For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor. Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

December 1



Preparing for Advent

Advent traditions can include Advent calendars, lighting an Advent wreath, a daily devotional, decorating a Christmas tree, as well as walking through the Jesse Tree scriptures.

Advent is an invitation to rest in anticipation of the God incarnate, to renew our sense of wonder, and to find hope, peace, joy, and love, finding assuredness in the here and now that Christ is coming again to right all the wrongs.

This time of preparation directs our hearts and minds to Christ's second coming and to the anniversary of our Lord's birth on Christmas.

A practice to cultivate as a Christian is to remain connected to The Story. We are a people of stories, and stories bring meaning to our lives. Instead of just going through the motions when it comes to the story of Jesus, we have to cultivate personal connection to the greater narrative. But if we turn it into work, or something we check off of a list, we can fail to see opportunities God gives us to be with those around us. Fail to be present. Fail to be connected with God, our self, and others as we go about our daily lives. When we operate from a place of connection, we see people more truly, have deeper conversations, and cultivate much more meaningful relationships with the people in our life. Advent should be as much about slowing down and being purposeful as it is about anything else. Slow down and ask God to help you to really see the people around you.

ORNAMENT: JESSE TREE

Scripture Readings:

Isaiah 11

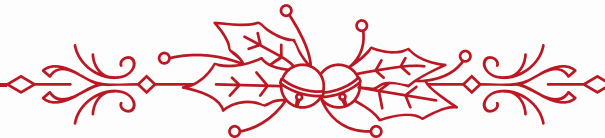
Question: What is the state of your heart this season?

Hymn: Joy to the World

Out of the stump of
Jesse, will grow a shoot
- yes, a new Branch
bearing fruit from the
old root. In that day the
heir to David's throne-
will be a banner of
salvation to all the
world.

Isaiah 11:1,10

December 2



Creation

"We who are here have been led in a special way to keep what is coming on our hearts and to shape ourselves according to it ... That which is to come from God is the most important thing we have, in the past and in the present as well as in the future." - Christoph Friedrich Blumhardt in Watch for the Light

Christoph goes on to say that there have to be people dressed for action with lamps lit because God has work to be done in work clothes, not Sunday best. He says, "We have to learn to live in what is coming from God every day and to carry a light from this awareness into the darkness." and "Anyone whose attention is fixed on the coming reign of God and who wants to see a change brought about in God's house will become more and more aware that there exists a universal wrongness that is pulled over us like a choking, suffocating blanket. He will know that the thing to do is to take hold of God's hand so that there is some effect on this night, so that at least a few areas are made receptive to God's truth and justice and are made ready to receive God himself. But to do this work we have to have a light."

ORNAMENT: EARTH

Scripture Readings:

GENESIS 1

ACTS 17:24-31

COLOSSIANS 1:15-23

Question: What aspects of creation remind you of God's care?

Hymn: Joy to the World

Then God said,
Let us make man in
our image, to be like
ourselves.

Genesis 1:26

December 3



The Fall

Just when everything is bearing down on us to such an extent that we can scarcely withstand it, the Christmas message comes to tell us that all our ideas are wrong, and that what we take to be evil and dark is really good and light because it comes from God. Our eyes are at fault, that is all. God is in the manger, wealth in poverty, light in darkness, succor in abandonment. No evil can befall us; whatever men may do to us, they cannot but serve the God who is secretly revealed as love and rules the world and our lives.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

ORNAMENT: APPLE

Scripture Readings:

GENESIS 2 & 3

MATTHEW 11:28-30

Question: How does God's pursuit of you change your heart for Him?

Hymn: Away in a Manger

It's only the fruit from the tree at the center of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God says, we must not eat it or touch it, or we will die.

Genesis 3:3-4

December 4



The Great Flood

People who wait have received a promise that allows them to wait. They have received something that is at work in them, like a seed that has started to grow.

Henri Nouwen

ORNAMENT: NOAH'S ARK

Scripture Readings:

GENESIS 6- 9

MATTHEW 24:37-29

Question: What gifts do you have that can be used as a blessing to others this season?

Hymn: Away in a Manger

Two by two they came into the boat, male and female, just as God had commanded. Then the Lord shut them in.

Genesis 7:15-16

December 5



The Call of Abram

For many people, waiting is an awful desert between where they are and where they want to go. And people do not like such a place. They want to get out of it by doing something.

Henry Nouwen, *on the opening of Luke's gospel on the opening scene of the good news is filled with waiting people.*

ORNAMENT: CAMEL

Scripture Readings:

Genesis 12:1-7

Question: What is one way Jesus has transformed your life?

Hymn: O Come, O Come Emmanuel

And Abram believed the LORD, and the LORD declared him righteous because of his faith.

Genesis 15:6

December 6



God's Promise to Abram

On this side of eternity, Christmas is still a promise. Yes, the Savior has come, and with him peace on earth, but the story is not finished. Yes, there is peace in our hearts, but we long for peace in our world. Every Christmas is still a “turning of the page” until Jesus returns. Every December 25 marks another year that draws us closer to the fulfillment of the ages, that draws us closer to . . . home. When we realize that Jesus is the answer to our deepest longing, even Christmas longings, each Advent brings us closer to his glorious return to earth. When we see him as he is, King of kings and Lord of lords, that will be “Christmas” indeed!

Nancy Guthrie, *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

ORNAMENT: STARS

Scripture Readings:
GENESIS 17:1-8

Question: How has God increased your faith in times when your circumstances haven't changed?

Hymn: O Come, O Come Emmanuel

And Abram believed the LORD, and the LORD declared him righteous because of his faith.

Genesis 15:6

December 7



Abraham Tested

This is what the LORD says:
Because you have obeyed me
and have not withheld even
your beloved son, I swear by my
own self that I will bless you
richly. I will multiply your
descendants into countless
millions, like the stars of the sky
and the sand on the seashore.
They will conquer their enemies
and through your descendants
all the nations of the earth will
be blessed—all because you have
obeyed me.

Genesis 22:16-18

ORNAMENT: RAM

Scripture Readings:

GENESIS 22:1-19

JOHN 3:16

**Question: How can you
invite God into your
worries this advent
season?**

Hymn: What Child is This?

Connection with the Divine has
evolved over time from a burning
bush, a tent, a temple, a first-century
Jewish carpenter, and now the
mysterious hidden portal within you.

Scott Erickson, *Honest Advent*

Peace

Week Two: Bethlehem's Candle



This week, we light two purple candles. The Candle of Hope and the Candle of Peace.

Isaiah 40:3-5

A voice of one calling: "In the wilderness prepare the way for the LORD ; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all people will see it together. For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

December 8



Jacob's Dream at Bethel

At the top of the stairway stood the LORD, and he said, "I am the LORD, the God of your grandfather Abraham and the God of your Father, Isaac. The ground you are lying on belongs to your father, Isaac. I will give it to you and your descendants."

Genesis 28:13

The celebration of Advent is possible only to those who are troubled in soul, who know themselves to be poor and imperfect, and who look forward to something greater to come.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

ORNAMENT: LADDER

Scripture Readings:

GENESIS 27 & 28

JOHN 1:45-51

Question: What stirs up awe and wonder in your soul?

Hymn: What Child is This?

December 9



God Provides

It is time to put things back where God the Lord put them. It is time for each of us to go to work, with the same unshakable sureness that the Lord will come, to set our life in God's order wherever we can.

Alfred Delp in *Watch for the Light*

ORNAMENT: JOSEPH'S
ROBE

Scripture Readings:

GENESIS 45

ROMANS 8:28

Question: What are you most grateful for this Advent season?

Hymn: Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

“Soon I will die,” Joseph told his brothers, “but God will surely come for you, to lead you out of this land of Egypt. He will bring you back to the land he vowed to give to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”

Genesis 50:24

December 10



God's Commandments

As we light our Advent candles, adding a new one each week, we move from darkness to light. Our ritual symbolically anticipates the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ, who will actually move us from darkness to light if we will let Him. Advent invites us to worship at the manger, but if we stop there, we have missed the meaning of Christ's birth. His advent is the beginning of the path that takes Jesus from the light of the wonderful star that signals His birth, to the terrible darkness of his full and final sacrifice, and then on to the blinding brilliant light of His resurrection, which is the advent of ours. As we return to the manger, let us not forget the meaning of his birth and the purpose of His life. He came to save, deliver, and redeem us: O come, let us adore Him!

Jean-Michel Hansen

ORNAMENT: TEN
COMMANDMENTS

Scripture Readings:

EXODUS 20:1-21

MATTHEW 22:36-39

**Question: How is God a
good Father to you?**

**Hymn: Hark! The Herald
Angels Sing**

Then the LORD told Abram, "You can be sure that your descendants will be strangers in a foreign land, and they will be oppressed as slaves for 400 years.

Genesis 15:13

December 11



Ruth

As the world around us surges into a frenzied and festive December, let's take a step away from the party and ask the Holy Spirit to prepare our hearts for a deeper and truer celebration of Christmas — one that is not undermined by lamentation, but that is made more potent because of it.

Kerry van der Vinne, *Advent: Let Every Heart Prepare Him Room*

But Ruth replied, “Don’t ask me to leave you and turn back. I will go wherever you go and live wherever you live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God.”

Ruth 1:16

ORNAMENT: WHEAT

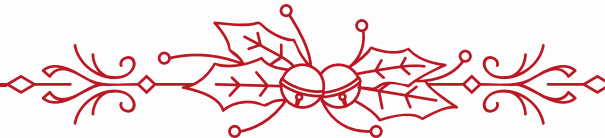
Scripture Readings:

Ruth 2

Question: Who can you extend God’s extravagant love to this Christmas season?

Hymn: We Three Kings

December 12



Rahab and the Spies

Before the spies lay down for the night, she went up on the roof and said to them, “I know that the Lord has given you this land and that a great fear of you has fallen on us, so that all who live in this country are melting in fear because of you.”

Joshua 2:8-9

ORNAMENT: ROPE

Scripture Readings:

Joshua 2:1-21

Question: What things bring you joy? What do those things say about where you are setting your hope?

Hymn: We Three Kings

At this Christmas when Christ comes, will He find a warm heart?
Mark the season of Advent by loving and serving the others with God's own love and concern.

Mother Teresa, *Love: A Fruit Always in Season*

December 13



Samuel Anoints David

David said to the Philistine, “You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.”

1 Samuel 17:45

ORNAMENT: CROWN AND SLINGSHOT

Scripture Readings:

1 SAMUEL 17

ACTS 2:22-36

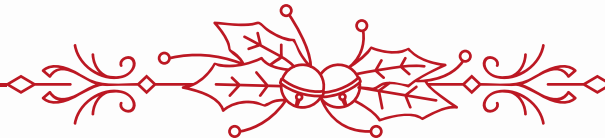
Question: Where do you look to for peace?

Hymn: O Come, All Ye Faithful

God is not dead, nor doth He sleep; The Wrong shall fail, the Right prevail, With peace on earth, good-will to men.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

December 14



The Good Shepherd

The question is not “How am I to find God?” but “How am I to let myself be found by him?”. God is not the patriarch who stays home, doesn’t move, and expects his children to come to him, apologize for their aberrant behavior, beg for forgiveness, and promise to do better. To the contrary, he leaves the house, ignoring his dignity by running toward them, pays no heed to apologies and promises of change, and brings them to the table. When I look through God’s eyes at my lost self and discover God’s joy at my coming home, then my life may become less anguished and more trusting.

Henri Nouwen, *The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming*

ORNAMENT: SHEEP &
STAFF

Scripture Readings:

2 Samuel 5:1-5

Question: How have you experienced the comfort and care of Jesus?

Hymn: O Come, All Ye Faithful

And the Lord said to you, ‘You will shepherd my people Israel, and you will become their ruler.’

2 Samuel 5:2

Joy

Week Three: The Shepherd's Candle



This week, we light three purple candles. The Candle of Hope, the Candle of Peace, and the Candle of Joy.

Isaiah 12:2-6

Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The LORD, the LORD himself, is my strength and my defense ; he has become my salvation." With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. In that day you will say: "Give praise to the LORD, proclaim his name; make known among the nations what he has done, and proclaim that his name is exalted. Sing to the LORD, for he has done glorious things; let this be known to all the world. Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel among you.

December 15



The Light of the World

The people walking in darkness
have seen a great light; on those
living in the land of deep darkness a
light has dawned.

For to us a child is born, to us a son is
given, and the government will be on
his shoulders. And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the greatness of his government
and peace there will be no end.

He will reign on David's throne and
over his kingdom, establishing and
upholding it with justice and
righteousness from that time on and
forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty
will accomplish this.

Scripture: Is. 9:2, 6-7

ORNAMENT: SUN

Scripture Readings:

Is. 9:2, 6-7

**Question: In what area of
your life can you declare
God's faithfulness in ways
you haven't been able to
thus far?**

**Hymn: While Shepherds
Watched Their Flocks**

Learn this well: Unless you
dramatically change your
way of thinking and become
teachable, and learn about
heaven's kingdom realm
with the wide-eyed wonder
of a child, you will never be
able to enter in.

(Matthew 18:3 The Passion
Translation)

December 16



Fire on the Mountain

You could more easily catch a hurricane in a shrimp net than you can understand the wild, relentless, passionate, uncompromising, pursuing love of God made present in the manger.

Brennan Manning

ORNAMENT: FIRE

Scripture Readings:

1 KINGS 18:20-40

2 KINGS 5

MATTHEW 17:1-13

Question: Where have you noticed God today?

Hymn: While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks

Then the time came for giving the evening gift. Elijah the man who spoke for God came near and said, "O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that You are God in Israel. Let it be known that I am Your servant, and have done all these things at Your Word.

1 Kings 18:36

December 17



The Branch from Jesse

A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him - the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord and he will delight in the fear of the Lord. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth ... The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them.

Isaiah 11:1-8

ORNAMENT: THE WOLF &
THE LAMB

Scripture Readings:

ISAIAH 7:14-16

ISAIAH 9:6-7

LUKE 4:14-30

Question: In what ways have you enjoyed this advent season?

Hymn: God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen

Once in our world, a Stable had something in it that was bigger than our whole world.

CS Lewis in The Last Battle

December 18



God's Messenger

The lack of mystery in our modern life is our downfall and our poverty. A human life is worth as much as the respect it holds for the mystery. We retain the child in us to the extent that we honor the mystery. Therefore, children have open, wide-awake eyes, because they know that they are surrounded by the mystery. They are not yet finished with this world; they still don't know how to struggle along and avoid the mystery, as we do. We destroy the mystery because we sense that here we reach the boundary of our being, because we want to be lord over everything and have it at our disposal, and that's just what we cannot do with the mystery.... Living without mystery means knowing nothing of the mystery of our own life, nothing of the mystery of another person, nothing of the mystery of the world; it means passing over our own hidden qualities and those of others and the world. It means remaining on the surface, taking the world seriously only to the extent that it can be calculated and exploited, and not going beyond the world of calculation and exploitation. Living without mystery means not seeing the crucial processes of life at all and even denying them.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *God is in the Manger: Reflections on Advent and Christmas*

ORNAMENT: THE WHALE

Scripture Readings:

JONAH 4

PSALM 139

JOHN 2:13-22

Question: How have you noticed God's beauty today?

Hymn: God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen

The Lord said, "But Nineveh has more than 120,000 people living in spiritual darkness, not to mention all the animals. Shouldn't I feel sorry for such a great city?"

Jonah 4:11

December 19



Bethlehem

Grace and truth is the invitation to be seen, and in that seeing to receive the gift of presence not withheld.

Incarnation is the process of being seen. To be yourself is to allow yourself to be known. To be known is to risk being loved ... or not.

Scott Erickson *in Honest Advent*

ORNAMENT: CITY & THE STAR

Scripture Readings:

MICAH 5

MATTHEW 2:1-6

Question: What are some ways to quiet the noise around you today?

Hymn: The First Noel

And because Joseph was a descendant of King David, he had to go to Bethlehem in Judea, David's ancient home. He traveled there from the village of Nazareth in Galilee.

Luke 2:4

December 20



Esther Trusts God

If we want Advent to transform us – our homes and hearts, and even nations – then the great question for us is whether we will come out of the convulsions of our time with this determination: Yes, arise! It is time to awaken from sleep. A waking up must begin somewhere. It is time to put things back where God intended them. It is time for each of us to go to work – certain that the Lord will come – to set our life in God's order wherever we can. Where God's word is heard, he will not cheat us of the truth; where our life rebels he will reprimand it.

Light your candles quietly, such candles as you possess, wherever you are.

Alfred Delp

ORNAMENT: SCEPTER

Scripture Readings:

Esther 4:10-17

Question: Where do you find it difficult to trust God?

Hymn: The First Noel

Esther 4:16

When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.

December 21



The Watchman

The world today needs people who have been shaken by ultimate calamities and emerged from them with the knowledge and awareness that those who look to the Lord will still be preserved by him, even if they are hounded from the earth. The Advent message comes out of an encounter of man with the absolute, the final, the gospel.

Alfred Delp in *Watch for the Light*

ORNAMENT: TOWER

Scripture Readings:

Habakkuk 3:16-19

Question: Where can you see God's deliverance?

Hymn: O Little Town of Bethlehem

I will stand at my watch
and station myself on
the ramparts;
I will look to see what he
will say to me,
and what answer I am
to give to this complaint.

Habakkuk 2:1

Love

Week Four: The Angel's Candle



This week, we light four purple candles - The Candle of Hope, the Candle of Peace, and the Candle of Joy, as well as the pink Candle of Love.

The Magnificat, Mary's song of praise: "And Mary said: "My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed for the Mighty One has done great things for me— holy is his name His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors."

December 22



He Prepares the Way

Advent comes, relentlessly and throughout life, with its words of hope and faith - shepherds and magi, crib and star, Emmanuel and glory - and stirs our hearts to pinnacles of possibility one more time ... The real Christmas gift, for which Advent is the process, is learning to hum hope, learning to dance the divine.

Joan Chittister

ORNAMENT: ANGEL

Scripture Readings:

LUKE 1:5-17

LUKE 1:67-79

Question: What have you enjoyed most about this advent season?

Hymn: O Little Town of Bethlehem

“And you, my little son, will be called the prophet of the Most High because you will prepare the way for the Lord.”

Luke 1:76

December 23



Jesus is Baptized

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”

Matthew 3:16-17

Day after day, men and women who feel more dead than alive, in the hearing or singing or seeing of this story, rediscover the utter and unspeakable and beautiful preciousness of life.

The story of Jesus' birth gets reproduced in human lives still, over and over and over again. The birth of Jesus is a birth with a message. It takes the entire Bible to bring the complete message, but this birth is the core of it: In Jesus, God is here to give us life, real life.

Eugene Peterson, *The Message of Christmas*

ORNAMENT: DOVE

Scripture Readings:

MATTHEW 3

MARK 1:1-7

LUKE 1:76, 3:1-6

JOHN 1:19-24

Question: What have you learned this Advent season?

Hymn: Silent Night

December 24



Opening our Hearts

The Christian mysteries are an indivisible whole. If we become immersed in one, we are led to all the others. Thus the way from Bethlehem leads inevitably to Golgotha, from the crib to the cross. When the blessed virgin brought the child to the temple, Simeon prophesied that her soul would be pierced by a sword, that this child was set for the fall and the resurrection of many, for a sign that would be contradicted. His prophecy announced the passion, the fight between light and darkness that already showed itself before the crib.

Edith Stein

You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

ORNAMENT: HEART

Scripture Readings:

MATTHEW 1:18-23

LUKE 1:26-56

Question: What do I plan to carry forward with me from this Advent season?

Hymn: Silent Night

Luke 1:31-33

December 25



He is Here

Light of Lights! All gloom dispelling,
Thou didst come to make thy dwelling
Here within our world of sight.
Lord, in pity and in power,
Thou didst in our darkest hour
Rend the clouds and show thy light.

Praise to thee in earth and heaven
Now and evermore be given,
Christ, who art our sun and shield.
Lord, for us thy life thou gavest,
Those who trust in thee thou safest,
All thy mercy stands revealed.

St. Thomas Aquinas

“But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God.”

John 1:12-13

ORNAMENT: NATIVITY

Scripture Readings:

JOHN 1

MATTHEW 28:18-20

**Question: What does
Christmas mean to me?**

Hymn: O Holy Night
