

ADVENT REFLECTION

Week 1: Preparing for the Coming of the Lord

GOSPEL

*Stay awake,
because you do not know when
the master of the house is coming.*

Mark 13:33-37



REFLECTION

When the Lord comes
how will I be judged?

– not be by how much
wealth I have amassed
or how many possessions
I have but rather by the
way I have loved,
especially the love and
care I have shown for my
brothers and sisters in
need: the poor; the lonely;
the widow and the
orphan; the marginalized;
those at the bottom of the
pile, considered by many
to be the dregs of society.

PRAYER

*Lord, often I am so bound up in my own concerns that
I forget your commandment to love my neighbour.*

*For the times I have thought only of my own needs and
have ignored the cries of those less fortunate than myself,
I ask your forgiveness.*

*For the times I have passed by on the other side and
deliberately shunned the beggar on the street corner,
I ask your forgiveness.*

*For the times I have been too preoccupied with my own
plans to notice the anguish of my brothers and sisters
ensnared in the poverty trap, I ask your forgiveness.*

*Open my ears, Lord, to hear the stories of people in need
and to do my best to make their hopes and dreams become
a reality.*

Help me to want less for myself and to live more simply.

ACTION

Go to Church Action on Poverty www.church-poverty.org.uk to research the latest campaign
action on behalf of those who suffer poverty and homelessness.

Organise a cake sale or a swap shop for unwanted goods and charge a small fee to raise
money for CAP or a local homeless shelter.

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Week 2: John the Baptist prepares the way for Christ

READING 2

*We are waiting for the new heaven
and the new earth*

2 Peter 3:8-14



REFLECTION

The gap between rich and poor is steadily widening. Some people have care-free lives of wealth and plenty whilst others are forced to borrow at exorbitant rates just to put food on the table.

Lord, this is not the Kingdom as you planned it.

In the new heaven and the new earth there will be a place at the feast for everyone and no one will go hungry.

PRAYER

Lord, I see injustice all around yet feel powerless to help: the problems seem too big to overcome.

For the times I have failed to act to help build a fairer society and continued in my own selfish ways, I ask your forgiveness.

For the times that my greed may have caused the gap between rich and poor to widen, I ask your forgiveness.

For the times I have mistaken superiority and self-righteousness for charity, I ask your forgiveness.

Open my eyes, Lord, to see how my actions may adversely affect those around me.

Help me to act in love and solidarity with my brothers and sisters.

ACTION

Look out for someone new and make them feel welcome.

Hold an International Food Evening to sample recipes from around the world. Invite people from other countries to share their customs, music and dance.

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Week 3: John the Baptist prepares the way for Christ

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*The spirit of the Lord has been given to me.
He has sent me to bring good news to the poor.*

Isaiah 61:1 (Luke 4:18)



REFLECTION

What good news do I bring?

How can I make a difference to the lives of those around me?

If I am to bring good news it must a message worth hearing that proclaims justice and fairness for all people and not just a privileged few.

What can I do to make that message a reality?

PRAYER

Lord, there is so much bad news in our world: famine; war; cruelty; prejudice; self-interest. And yet there is also much good: love; concern; solidarity; small, unseen, unselfish acts of kindness.

For the times I have focused only on the bad and forgotten to see the good, I ask your forgiveness.

For the times I have looked the other way because I just didn't know what I could do, I ask your forgiveness.

For the times I have meant to do something, got sidetracked and then forgotten my good intentions, I ask your forgiveness.

Open my mouth, Lord, to speak out boldly against injustice.

May I be an advocate for those who live in despair and bring them words of comfort and hope.

ACTION

Go to Pax Christi www.paxchristi.org.uk/ to find out more about their work for peace.

Pray especially for the projects supported by Pax Christi for peace and reconciliation between Israeli Jews and Palestinian Muslims in the Middle East (Jesus' birthplace).

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Week 4: Preparing for the birth of Jesus

Psalm

*I will sing for ever of your love,
O Lord.*

Psalm 88:1,
2-3, 4-5, 27, 29



REFLECTION

Perhaps I lack the courage to actually sing of your love, Lord, but I can show your love.

The best way I can do this is by following your teaching to love my neighbours throughout the world.

Grant me the boldness to respond to your call to bring about a Kingdom of love and justice and peace for all people.

PRAYER

Lord, help me to show your love to those who are hard to care for; to those who reject your love; to those with whom I struggle to feel a sense of solidarity.

For the times I have only loved family and friends and taken no notice of others, I ask your forgiveness.

For the times I missed the opportunity to show your love through fear of looking foolish, I ask your forgiveness.

For the times I have lacked the confidence to approach a newcomer and have been wary of stepping out of my comfort zone, I ask your forgiveness.

Open my heart, Lord, to reach out to everyone in need.

This Advent I pray that I can be your eyes and ears, your mouth, your hands and feet and your heart.

ACTION

Go to Live Simply www.livesimply.org.uk to discover more about:

living simply;
living in solidarity with the poor and the marginalized;
and living sustainably to protect and conserve the beautiful world God has created for future generations to enjoy.