



The First Sunday of Advent Dec. 3, 2023

### **Opening Hymn #56**

Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**And blessed be God's kingdom now and forever. Amen**

**The Advent Bidding** The Book of Occasional Services

### **Lighting of the Advent Wreath**

**O Come O Come Emmanuel  
verses 1& 2**

**[Verse 1]**

O come, O come, Emmanuel  
And ransom captive Israel  
That mourns in lonely exile here  
Until the Son of God appear

**[Refrain]**

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

**[Verse 2]**

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  
The Lord be with you **and also with you**

### **The Collect**

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of

this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

**The Collect** Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

### **Old Testament Isaiah 64:1-9**

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,  
so that the mountains would quake at your presence--  
as when fire kindles brushwood  
and the fire causes water to boil  
to make your name known to your adversaries,  
so that the nations might tremble  
at your presence!

When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,  
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.

From ages past no one has heard,  
no ear has perceived,  
no eye has seen any God besides  
you,  
who works for those who wait for him.

You meet those who gladly do right,  
those who remember you in your  
ways.

But you were angry, and we sinned;  
because you hid yourself we  
transgressed.

We have all become like one who is  
unclean,  
and all our righteous deeds are  
like a filthy cloth.

We all fade like a leaf,  
and our iniquities, like the wind,  
take us away.

There is no one who calls on your  
name,  
or attempts to take hold of you;  
for you have hidden your face from  
us,  
and have delivered us into the  
hand of our iniquity.

Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;  
we are the clay, and you are our  
potter;  
we are all the work of your hand.

Do not be exceedingly angry,  
O LORD,  
and do not remember iniquity  
forever.  
Now consider, we are all your  
people.

#### The Response Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18

1 Hear, O Shepherd of Israel,  
leading Joseph like a flock; \*  
shine forth, you that are  
enthroned upon the cherubim.

2 In the presence of Ephraim,  
Benjamin, and Manasseh, \*  
stir up your strength and come  
to help us.

3 Restore us, O God of hosts; \*  
show the light of your  
countenance, and we shall be  
saved.

4 O LORD God of hosts, \*  
how long will you be angered  
despite the prayers of your  
people?

5 You have fed them with the bread  
of tears; \*  
you have given them bowls of  
tears to drink.

6 You have made us the derision of  
our neighbors, \*  
and our enemies laugh us to  
scorn.

7 Restore us, O God of hosts; \*  
show the light of your  
countenance, and we shall be  
saved.

16 Let your hand be upon the man  
of your right hand, \*  
the son of man you have made  
so strong for yourself.

17 And so will we never turn away  
from you; \*  
give us life, that we may call  
upon your Name.

18 Restore us, O LORD God of  
hosts; \*  
show the light of your  
countenance, and we shall be  
saved.

#### The Epistle 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Grace to you and peace from God our  
Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I give thanks to my God always for you  
because of the grace of God that has  
been given you in Christ Jesus, for in  
every way you have been enriched in  
him, in speech and knowledge of every  
kind-- just as the testimony of Christ  
has been strengthened among you--  
so that you are not lacking in any  
spiritual gift as you wait for the  
revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He  
will also strengthen you to the end, so

that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

## The Gospel

### Mark 13:24-37

Jesus said, "In those days, after that suffering,

the sun will be darkened,  
and the moon will not give  
its light,  
and the stars will be falling from  
heaven,  
and the powers in the  
heavens will be shaken.

Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

"From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

"But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and

commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

## The Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father.  
Through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven:  
by the power of the Holy Spirit  
he became incarnate from the Virgin  
Mary,**

**and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under  
Pontius Pilate;**

**he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the**

**Scriptures;**

**he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of  
the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge  
the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,  
the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the  
Son.**

**With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.**  
**He has spoken through the Prophets.**  
**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.**  
**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**  
**We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.**  
**Amen.**

### **Prayers of the People**

Let us be attentive to the call of Jesus our Lord to be awake and to prepare his coming in the Church and the world of today and let us say with hope: R/ Lord of hope, hear our prayer.

Let us offer our prayers to God for the life of the world and for all God's people in their daily life and work and let us say Lord of all life, hear our prayer

- For the Church, especially for Justin, the Archbishop of Canterbury; and in the Anglican Cycle of Prayer we pray for the Episcopal Church of the Middle East , especially those members living in Gaza and the West Bank. We pray for Michael our Presiding Bishop; Lawrence, Geralyn, Daniel, and William our local Bishops, and all the people and parishes of the Diocese of Long Island, especially for those in our Deanery and for Charles our Priest.

We pray that the Christian community may have the firm, indestructible hope that we can build a better world if we become aware that Christ is alive among us today, let us pray:

**R/ Lord of hope, hear our prayer.**

- For all Christian Churches, that they may respond to God's expectations and proclaim in words and deeds the Lord's message of love and service, let us pray:

**R/ Lord of hope, hear our prayer.**

- For the world in which we live, that all may work together to put an end to war and

hatred, oppression and injustice and to seek peace, freedom and justice, let us pray:

**R/ Lord of hope hear our prayer.**

- For the poor and the suffering, that through us Christ may come to them to visit and uplift the sick, to help the hungry earn their food in dignity, to liberate those unjustly deprived of their freedom, and to bring the good news to those rejected, let us pray:

**R/ Lord of hope, hear our prayer.**

- For all of us here, that we may not be self-satisfied but keep seeking Christ and his light by renewing ourselves and living for those around us, let us pray:

**R/ Lord of hope, hear our prayer.**

- For all those whose names appear on our parish's prayer list.  
For those who have departed this life, and all those who rest in our cemetery  
I invite you to share with the community gathered here any intercession or names you may we us to pray for ...Pause.....  
For all of these we pray....

**R/ Lord of hope, hear our prayer.**

Our saving God, long ago you sent your Son Jesus among us, but we have been little aware of his presence and we hide him even from others.

Wake us up, make us recognize him, that he may be the light of our lives and that eagerly we may lead people to him.

May he build up among us and with us a world and a kingdom of peace and love where we serve you in one another, as we move forward in hope to your home of endless joy and rest. We ask this through Christ our Lord. R/ Amen.

When the Lord comes, he will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness , and will disclose the purposes of the heart.

Therefore in the light of Christ let us confess our sins..

*Silence is kept.*

**Most merciful God,**  
**we confess that we have sinned against**  
**you**  
**in thought, word, and deed,**  
**by what we have done,**  
**and by what we have left undone.**  
**We have not loved you with our whole**  
**heart;**  
**we have not loved our neighbors as**  
**ourselves.**  
**We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.**  
**For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,**  
**have mercy on us and forgive us;**  
**that we may delight in your will,**  
**and walk in your ways,**  
**to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

**Hymn during the preparation of the Gifts**  
**The Doxology**

**Eucharistic Prayer II for Advent (of the**  
**Scottish Episcopal Church)**

The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**  
Lift up your hearts.  
**We lift them to the Lord.**  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give him thanks and praise**

It is indeed right to give you our thanks and praise, O God, for from your deepest mercy comes our hope of salvation. And now we give you thanks because you sent him to redeem us from sin and death and to make us inheritors of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may with joy

behold his appearing, and in confidence may stand before him.

**Holy, holy, holy Lord**  
**God of power and might.**  
**Heaven and earth are full of your glory.**  
**Hosanna in the highest.**  
**Blessed is he who comes in the name of**  
**the Lord.**  
**Hosanna in the highest.**

Glory and thanksgiving be to you, most loving Father. In Jesus you showed us yourself. Our hope is built on him, the first, the last, the living one. Obedient, even to accepting death, He opened the gate of glory and calls us now to share the life of heaven. Before he was given up to suffering and death, alight with the vision of a feast that heralded a kingdom yet to come, at supper with his disciples he took bread and offered you thanks. He broke the bread, and gave it to them, saying: "Take, eat. This is my Body: it is broken for you." After supper, he took the cup, he offered you thanks, and gave it to them saying: "Drink this, all of you. This is my Blood of the new covenant; it is poured out for you, and for all, that sins may be forgiven. Do this in remembrance of me." We now obey your Son's command.

**We recall his blessed passion and death,**  
**his glorious resurrection and ascension;**  
**and we look for the coming of his**  
**Kingdom.**

Made one with him, we offer you these gifts with them ourselves, a single, holy, living sacrifice. Hear us, most merciful Father, and send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon this bread and this wine, that overshadowed by his life-giving power,

they may be the Body and Blood of your Son, and we may be kindled with the fire of your love and renewed for the service of your Kingdom.

Help us, who are baptized into the fellowship of Christ's Body to live and work to your praise and glory; may we grow together in unity and love until at last, in your new creation, we enter into our heritage in the company of the Virgin Mary, the apostles, and prophets, and of all our brothers and sisters living and departed.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory be to you, Lord of all ages, world without end.

**Amen.**

**All: Our Father...**

*Priest: O Lamb of God, who takes the sins of the world, **have mercy upon us.***

**O Lamb of God, who takes the sins of the world, **have mercy upon us.****

**O Lamb of God, who takes the sins of the world, **grant us your peace****

**Gifts of God.....**

**Communion Meditation**

I see the King of glory Coming on the clouds of fire

The whole earth shakes, the whole earth shakes

I see His love and mercy Washing over all our sin

The people sing, the people sing

[Chorus]

Hosanna, Hosanna

Hosanna in the highest

Hosanna, Hosanna

Hosanna in the highest

I see a generation

Rising up to take the place

With selfless faith, with selfless faith

I see a near revival

Staring as we pray and seek

We're on our knees, we're on our knees

[Chorus]

Heal my heart and make it clean

Open up my eyes to the things unseen

Show me how to love like You have loved me

Break my heart for what breaks Yours

Everything I am for Your kingdom's cause

As I walk from earth into eternity

**Prayer after Communion (From the Book of Common Worship, CofE)**

**Father in heaven, who sent your Son to redeem the world and will send him again to be our judge: give us grace so to imitate him in the humility and purity of his first coming that, when he comes again, we may be ready to greet him with joyful love and firm faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

**Blessing From the Book of Occasional Services of the Episcopal Church**

May Almighty God, by whose providence our Savior Christ came among us in great humility, sanctify you with the light of his blessing and set you free from all sin, rewarded with unending life

**Closing Hymn # 72**

Go in peace and live in the joy of knowing that the Lord is near.. **R/ Thanks be to God**

### **Beginning Advent:**

#### **What are the key first steps to enter into Advent?**

We can all slow down. We can all breathe more deeply. We can all begin to trust that this will be a blessed time. Then, when we let ourselves be who we are, and hear the Scriptures, we can begin to quietly pray, "Come, Lord, Jesus." We might expand that prayer, in quiet moments of our days ahead, "Come into my life. I trust you don't mind if it is still messy. I believe you love me, because I need your love. I don't fear you can't find the way to my heart. Come and fill me with peace and the love only you can give." Some of us will want to open our hands on our laps or hold up our arms in the privacy of our rooms and say out loud, "Come, Lord, Jesus, come into this house, into my family, into our struggles. Come and heal us, and give us join again. Come and unite us and let us experience, each in our own way, a bit of the joy you are offering me now." And, before a single decoration goes up, we have prepared for Christmas' message with the foundation of faith, with the mystery of Advent's gift. God wants to be with us. Advent is letting God's will be done in our hearts and in our everyday lives.

### **Beginning Advent:**

#### **Getting in Touch with Myself**

One of the best ways to prepare for the very special season of Advent is to "get in touch with ourselves." It may sound odd, but one symptom of our contemporary lives is that we can often be quite "out of touch" with what is going on in our very own hearts. We are about to begin our Advent, right at the time our Western culture begins Christmas preparations. It is a busy time, and our heads are filled with details to remember. And, it is a time of emotional complexity that

is part of this holiday season - with all of the expectations and challenges of family and relationships: who we want to be with and who we struggle to be with. So, our hearts are a bit tender, if not completely defended from experiencing anything deeply. We are about to hear some very powerful and stirring readings from Isaiah, the Prophet. We will re-enter the ancient tradition of a people longing for the coming of a Savior. We may remember the days of our childhood when we longed for Christmas to come, because it was a magical time of receiving gifts. As adults, we have to ask ourselves: "What is it I long for now?" The answer won't come easily. The more we walk around with that question, and let it penetrate through the layers of distraction and self-protection, the more powerfully we will experience Advent.

### **The Two Parts of Advent:**

#### **Part 1: up until December 16**

While most liturgical seasons have the gospel as their main focus, during the first weeks of Advent, the Church gives us daily readings from the prophet Isaiah. With the eyes of faith, these foretell the coming of the Messiah. Rather than a continuous gospel narrative familiar to us for most of the year, this part of Advent offers a wide variety of gospel readings that support the first reading of the day. After almost two weeks of Isaiah readings, we hear the foretelling of a Messiah from other prophets from the Hebrew scriptures - in Sirach, Numbers, Zephaniah and returning to Isaiah. With each passing week, the prophets speak more clearly of the coming of a Savior. So, in reading the first reading, for the first part of Advent, we listen to the anticipation, expectation, hope and promise. In listening to the second reading, we listen for the fulfillment or connection with the gospel.

#### **Part 2: December 17 - 24**

In these last eight days before Christmas, the relationship between the readings changes. Now the gospel brings us to our

celebration of Christmas. The gospels are taken from the infancy narratives of Matthew and Luke. Each of these days, the first reading is taken from the Hebrew scriptures, and chosen to match the gospel. In many cases we can imagine Matthew or Luke having the first reading open on their desks while they wrote the gospel. So, we can read the gospel first and then read the first reading. The sense of anticipation and fulfillment builds as we read the story of the preparation for Jesus' first coming into this world for us.

### **Am I Too Defended for Advent?:**

All of these traumas and states of inner disturbances and defenses can make entering into Advent very, very difficult. So, what do we do, if we find ourselves identifying with this defensiveness in any way? Is there hope? There is always hope! This is a season designed by our God to offer hope. Images from Isaiah, the prophet, offer hope to a people in the darkness and gloom of political captivity in Babylon. It is all language that offers us hope to believe that the coming of Jesus into our world is all about our personal liberation from whatever captivity we are in, whatever darkness or discouragement envelops us.

If we can read this prophetic announcement with an open enough heart to hear it as addressed to our personal situation, then Advent has begun in us. It is simple. It involves imagining that God can do this. We don't need to know how, to rationally figure it out, to begin to have evidence, or figure out how those who hurt us will pay for what they did. All we have to do is listen to how "good news" sounds in our ears. If a tiny bit of our hearts longs for this to be true, if even one image here or one phrase stirs something in us, then we are letting our defenses down enough to let the Holy Spirit in. And, God's Spirit can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. If we can put down our guard enough to imagine that this season - these four weeks - could help us

know God's love for us more deeply, could help us hear about the first coming of our Lord into this world, so that we can be opened to accept his coming into our hearts these days, then grace has entered in beyond the defenses and Advent has begun in us. Read these words slowly. If possible, begin by praying a simple prayer: "Come, Lord Jesus, Come and touch my heart. Come and be with me during Advent. Let your Word make me defense-less before your love."

### **Prayers During Advent:**

#### **Working in the Kitchen During Advent**

What joy this brings me, Lord. Thank you for guiding me into the kitchen for some time of silence with you. The room fills with wonderful smells and I share tastes and samples with my family as they make extra trips through the kitchen on days like this. Thank you for each and every one of these special people in my family. They are like the ingredients of my own life, adding spice and heat and wonderful flavor and melding together into a unique dish designed to glorify you. You know, God, cooking is quite a bit like my life. It's messy, I get careless and sometimes things don't turn out as I had planned. But in the mess of my life, that's where I can turn to you. Help me when I have to deal with being so imperfect. Bless me with humility when I grapple with my own poverty. Let me feel how deeply you love me, even when all I have to offer is scorched and humble. Be with me Lord, in this kitchen today. Help me to take the time in this intimate silence with you, to pray for each person who will eat this food. Allow me to remember all of those around the world who have so little food, and bless those who share what little they have.

#### **Praying Through Exhaustion**

Oh Lord, I am so tired. It seems like the lists of to-do's get longer each day, the frenzy in my home each night gets wilder. It seems like the holidays have barely started and already I am behind. Help me, dear Jesus.

Let me feel your loving arms wrap me tightly in the warm embrace of your endless love. Teach me to make choices about my time, to remember what is important this season and to say "NO" whenever my Yes would take me away from your peace. Fill me with patience, love and a sense of humor. Remind me of your deep love for me and let the fire of that love be something I can share with everyone around me.

### **Shopping during Advent**

Dear God, as I look through my gift shopping list, I hold up to you each person listed on it. Slowly, one by one, I ask that the fire of your abundant love burn within each of them. I pray that the gift I find for each person will bring joy into that life. But, help me to keep a balance this season, Lord. Let me keep my buying in perspective, not to spend more than I need to or can afford. Let me not give in to the pressures of this world and not equate love with money spent. Let me always remember the many, many people who have so much less in material things. Help me to buy wisely, so that my choices will not burden those in other countries who are so deeply affected by this country's economy. And finally, loving God, help me to find time in the frantic moments of each day to become centered on you. Walking through a store, riding on the bus, hurrying down a street: let each of these times be moments when I can remember your incredible love for me and rejoice in it.

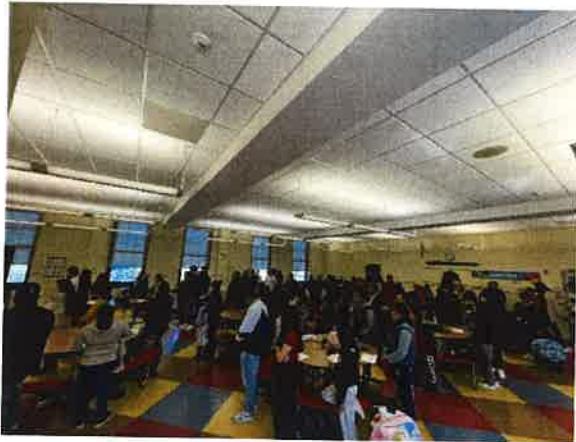
### **Advent as I Consider the World Situation**

God of comfort, these times seem so uncertain, so scary. The world seems darker than it has in the past and I am less sure of myself. Maybe that's a good thing; maybe now I am turning to you with a realization that I need you so much more and that my life is not in my own control. Let me not forget all of those around the world who are frightened at this moment. Help those who are victims of terrorism and war. Be with those who have lost so much in the past year. Hold us all in your loving arms and let us be comforted by the strength and

peace you want to much to offer us through the birth of your son, Jesus. Thank you for the many gifts you offer us.

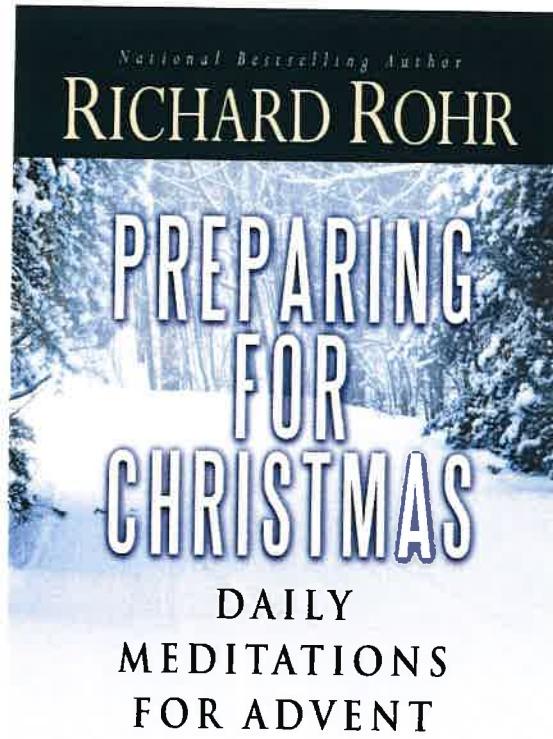
### **Preparing for Christmas after the loss of a Loved One**

Such a loss! Such a keen and tearing pain. Even when I am in a crowded room, there is a loneliness I never knew existed. Comforting God, I have turned to you so many times for solace, and I come again. While the world is bright and sparkling, my heart feels leaden and has an emptiness that cannot be filled. Lord, how can I enter into this season of joy? In my head I celebrate your birth into this world, but in my everyday life, I am filled with a grief that runs so very deep. You blessed me with a loving relationship and now it is gone from my life. How can I be faithful to that love and the memory of that love and my sorrow in this season of "Rejoice!"?? Tears are so close to the surface all the time and helpful friends who want to "keep me busy" don't seem to really understand that I need to embrace my grief. I am afraid of letting go of the sadness and losing the deep love connection I had. Instead of entering into the Rejoice of Christmas, I long for the sorrow of Lent. I beg you Lord, show me how the two are connected. I ponder the name Emmanuel and know that it means "God with us." With us. With me in this world, in this sorrow. If I look beyond my pain, I know that you, too, suffered so much in this world. I never understood so clearly before that Emmanuel is what your nativity is really about. You are in my world, in my pain. Thank you, Lord, for the loved one you blessed my life with. Grant me now in my grief, a peace. Give me a comfort that might not make the tears go away, but that lets me feel your presence as you take up a place deep in my heart, with me.



The Church of St. Francis, (Iglesia San Francisco), is the newest congregation in our Diocese. Formerly known as the Centro Franciscano, it was officially welcomed into the Diocese, and our Deanery, at our Diocesan Convention last month. This is one of the most vibrant ministries in our Diocese. Composed primarily of East End farm workers, (its Bishop's Committee is entirely made up of farmworkers), it includes families with a total of about 50 or 60 kids. Several of our Deanery churches have made these families the object of their Adopt-a-Family programs this Advent. When I asked Fr. Gerardo if they still might need anything, he said "Food!" Many of these families find it difficult, in these winter months especially, when there is not as much work, to meet rent, or utilities, or medical expenses and groceries.

**Therefore, in This Advent season, as one of our spiritual practices, we will donate funds to purchase gift cards at the Gala Fresh supermarket in Riverhead. Any online donations in Advent to the Rector's discretionary fund will go to this purpose, there will be a donation box, at the front of the Church near the votive candles for cash or checks, or if you put a check in the "regular" collection make sure the memo says "St. Francis". All checks should be made to the "St. Mary's RDF**



Dearest All,

For the Advent season we are using **"Preparing for Christmas – Daily Devotional for Advent" by Richard Rohr.** There is a scripture reading with each day along with a daily meditation.

At church you will find copies of the book, along with a printout of the scripture passage [and a PDF has been mailed out] **We will meet Monday, December 4, 11 and 18 at 5:30 pm** to discuss our journey as we prepare for Christmas 2023.

The audio edition of this book can be downloaded via [Audible](#).

I hope you can join us on this journey and invite anyone you think might want to join!

Blessing to all, Kate and Carolyn



## Birthdays

December 2 Walter Cole Brigham  
December 7 Jeffey Gibbs  
December 10 Walter Richards Sr.  
December 11 Rhonda Lee Corbett  
December 11 Stuart Nicoll



## Pray for the Healing & Support:

We pray for Wendy Turgeon, Paul Mobius, Betianne Morritt, Chrissy Gross, Rod Griffis, Jane Babinski and their continued recovery. and we continue to pray for Cindy Belt's sister Susan Belt Hartson

We pray for Ukraine, for the Holy Land and the Middle East for peace and for safety. For all those suffering from extreme weather in our country and around the world.

For those grieving loved ones, for those who are ill, for all those who serve the sick, the needy and those in prison, for all those who are anxious or fearful. For all those in the midst of war or natural disasters and we pray for...

Barbara Brigham, Sara Mundy, Jean Adams, Kathy Cogan, Jim Fancher, Diane & Nancy Fickett, Bob Fisher, Sharon Gibbs, Kathryn James, Halle Kneeland, Virginia Springsteen, Vita Stellke, Valerie Capon, Linda VanArdale, Beth Wagner, Louie Cicero, Barbara Allen, Hermance Canning, Matthew Cole, Sr. Joy Wright, and all our parishioners living with cancer, known or undetected & for all those who participate in a 12 step group here at St. Mary's. Call in any requests or corrections to the office. (631) 749-0770



# ADVENT CALENDAR 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>3 Worship</b> <b>Advent 1</b>  Read Luke 21:25-36. How do the symbols of the Advent season help you understand the story of Jesus? Where do you see them in your worship today?	<b>4 Turn</b>  Read Isaiah 58. How does this reading challenge you to think about feasts and festivals differently? How might this lesson change the way you celebrate or recognize this holy season?	<b>5 Learn</b>  Read Matthew 4:18-22. How do these verses from Matthew inspire you to read Scripture with new eyes? Try reading several different translations of this passage. See how the language might change your reading of it.	<b>6 Pray</b>  Pray along with the Collect for Advent 1, found on page 211 of <i>The Book of Common Prayer</i> . Set a timer for three minutes to sit in silence and hear what God might be saying back to you.	<b>7 Bless</b>  Call or write a letter to a family member with whom you would like to have a closer relationship. Make plans in the new year to chat on the phone or meet over Zoom or in person. Let them know how much you love them and look forward to knowing them better.	<b>8 Go</b>  Read or watch your local news. Ask God to open your heart and eyes to ways you can promote reconciliation and healing in your community.	<b>9 Rest</b>  Spend at least 45 minutes outside today, without doing yard work or fixing lights or redoing bows on the garland. Take some time to just sit outside and let the air wash over you, taking away the stress and worry of the moment. Read Psalm 100 before and after your outside time. See how this psalm may help you rest and recharge your spirit.
<b>10 Worship</b> <b>Advent 2</b>  Read Luke 3:1-6. How does the story of John the Baptist fill your heart with hope?	<b>11 Turn</b>  Turn away from the busyness of the world right now. Turn your heart and mind toward giving thanks for this time of reflection, refreshment, and renewal.	<b>12 Learn</b>  Read Luke 1:45. Share your faith story with one new person this week. It can be someone you have known for a while who has not heard the faith part of your story.	<b>13 Pray</b>  Pray along with the Collect for Advent 2, found on page 211 of <i>The Book of Common Prayer</i> . As you are out and about for the rest of this week, notice the people you pass. Ask God to bless them in their lives and work. See how this changes the way you go about your week.	<b>14 Bless</b>  Spend a significant amount of time today discerning if there is a special blessing or gift you can share with your church, a local ministry, or with your community. Ask God to inspire and equip you with the fortitude and tools to make this gift something truly memorable and heartfelt.	<b>15 Go</b>  Go out of your way to have a conversation with someone you might not normally visit with today. Ask God to open your heart to hear this person as God does.	<b>16 Rest</b>  Put your phone on airplane mode and leave it in a dresser drawer for an hour or two. Whatever happens in that time, you can handle later. Give this time to yourself and Jesus, to rest and recharge for the week ahead.
<b>17 Worship</b> <b>Advent 3</b>  Imagine the faces you'd like to see at church — an all-star list of folks you want to worship with. This could be people you know from summer camp when you were a kid, people who might have already died, people you work with — all your favorites. Commit to pray for those folks this week. And make a commitment to ask one of your all-stars to come to church with you in the next month.	<b>18 Turn</b>  Do you have amends or apologies or adjustments you need to make? Ask God to open your heart and mind to those opportunities for reconciliation and growth. Thank God for the gifts of mercy and love, and the courage to make the changes necessary. And then do your best, with God's help, to make those changes.	<b>19 Learn</b>  Read Luke 1:59-80. When Zechariah's speech returns, he praises God. If you lost the power to speak for nine months like Zechariah did, what would be your first word of praise? Share this with your family, friends, and on social media.	<b>20 Pray</b>  Pray along with the Collect for Advent 3, found on page 212 in <i>The Book of Common Prayer</i> . How will prayer guide you through the rest of the week? Set aside special time today to focus your intentions on stirring up peace and spreading joy.	<b>21 Bless</b>  We know that angels are God's special messengers to us, and that Gabriel spent intentional time with Mary, helping her to understand her part in God's story. Who has shared an important lesson or their presence with you this week? Thank them today with a call or note.	<b>22 Go</b>  Go out into your neighborhood today. Where is God at work? Ask God to show you how you can celebrate that good work and name God's presence in your community.	<b>23 Rest</b>  Set aside 30 minutes to spend in silence with your best friend today. Sure, it may feel a little weird to be silent on the phone or while sitting next to each other on the couch or across the table. Just give it a try. Make sure to set aside time after your silence to pray for each other and to say thanks for the time of rest.
<b>24 Rest</b> <b>Advent 4</b>  The conventional wisdom is that new parents should rest when the baby is resting. Make sure you take some time out to rest with Baby Jesus — and marvel in the wonder of a fresh, new, clean, shiny, tiny, precious start. Take a nap and thank God for the gift of Jesus and for peace at Christmas.						