

# ADVENT DAY BY DAY

Welcome to week 1 of Advent Day by Day -a short daily Scripture reflection for the 25 days from 1<sup>st</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> December. There is a different theme for each of the four weeks of Advent.

As 1<sup>st</sup> December falls on Tuesday there are five days under this first theme. We will begin our second week on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December. Here are some tips for using this weekly format. It might be helpful to read instructions for steps 1, 2 and 3 through once, before starting this daily reflection:

## STEP 1: SELECT THE SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THE DAY

As you have received the verses for the whole week it can be tempting to jump between verses or read them all at the same time. Instead, focus in on the verse given for the day, so on day 1 look only at what is offered for day 1. You might find it helpful to highlight the day's verse before starting your reflection for that day, and then cross it out when you move on to the next day. On some days we offer a couple of very short verses, not just one.

<b>THEME FOR WEEK 1: STAY AWAKE. WAIT FOR THE LORD WITH LONGING AND HOPE</b>	
<b>DAY 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in His word I hope. <i>Psalm 130</i></li><li>• It is full time now for you to wake from sleep...the day is at hand. <i>Romans 13:11</i></li></ul>
<b>DAY 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Why so downcast my soul, why sigh within me? Put your hope in God: I shall praise him still, my saviour and my God <i>Ps 42</i></li><li>• Keep your hopes high, for the day of the Lord's coming is near <i>James 5:9</i></li></ul>
<b>DAY 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It is to heaven that we look expectantly for the coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ to save us. <i>Phil 3</i></li><li>• Strengthen all weary hands, steady all trembling knees, and say to all faint hearts, "Courage, do not be afraid". <i>Is 35</i></li></ul>
<b>DAY 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Turn to me and be saved. I am your God. There is no other god besides me I have called you by your name, I go before you. <i>Is 45</i></li></ul>
<b>DAY 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "For we know that, from the beginning until now, the whole creation has been groaning in one great act of giving birth. And not only creation but all of us who possess the first fruits of the Spirit. We too groan inwardly as we wait" <i>Romans 8: 22-23</i></li></ul>

## **STEP 2: SUGGESTIONS FOR USING THE DAILY SCRIPTURE VERSES**

You may use these Scripture verses on your own, or with other family members or friends.

### ***Before Starting Each Day***

Decide on the best time to consider the texts for a given day. It may be on the morning of the day or it may be on the previous evening.

Sit comfortably, settle into a few minutes of quiet time, putting aside any distractions and tasks.

Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you.

When you are ready, read the text for that day/the following day.

If you are alone, you may wish to just turn the words over in your mind for a while, let them sink in, ponder them in prayer. Consider if one or more words strike you particularly.

If you are using the texts with other people, allow a few moments for everyone to think about the texts. If children are participating, check that they have heard and understood the text.

Then ask:

What does this verse mean for me/for us today, in this particular Advent, December 2020?

What key words or message will I/we keep in mind during today/tomorrow?

### ***During the Day***

You might want to jot a thought or action that the text prompted or keep a daily diary of this. Children might want to make an Advent calendar card or page for that day, with a key word or message, or draw a picture or write a prayer for the day or once a week for the overall theme of the week. They might choose to make a collage from nature or magazine cuttings, on the theme for the week. If you are out walking you might see something that reminds you of the day's message. Take a photo.

### ***At the end of the Day***

Take a few minutes to reflect again on what the verse meant for you.

Share with others if applicable or maybe jot in your diary.

Give a short prayer of thanks for the insights gained, and recall any ways in which you might have forgotten the message or acted against it during the day. Ask God to bless this day of your Advent journey. Turn your thoughts to preparing for the next day's journey.

## **STEP 3: SHARE YOUR ADVENT JOURNEY**

It would be great if we can encourage each other in our cluster parishes and share thoughts that struck us. If you or your family have taken any photos you can post them on a Facebook page we have set up for Advent. If children have drawn pictures or written messages or put up Advent calendar cards for each day or prepared a collage, take a photo of these and post it on the Facebook page (bearing in mind the need to safeguard children's own identities). You might also wish to post a thought that has struck you on a particular day or on the theme for the week.

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