



ADVENT REFLECTIONS FOR 2019

Week Two



THIS RESOURCE

As we move through the season of Advent for 2019, we are mindful of how short it is and how easy it is to pass us by. As Pope Francis reminds us, Advent is a time to be 'mindful and pray'.

To help us with our spiritual preparation this Advent, we offer four personal reflections – one for each week of Advent - on the important themes of this beautiful season. Each reflection is easy to use in groups OR personally. Each reflection gives us the opportunity to pray, to ponder and to listen to our speakers reflect on our understanding of the season. Some questions help us to go deeper, personally or as a group. We suggest taking one a week, but if you have a parish retreat day these could provide the materials you might want to use for your time together

We are grateful to Gavin D'Costa, Laura Stotesbury, Fr. Tom Dubois and Sarah Richards for their reflective contributions which will help us to engage more fully with Advent and its rich themes.

ADVENT REFLECTION TIME A TIME FOR PEACE

Prayer for Advent

Watch, wait, hope!
Even now, the tender leaves of peace
may be growing on the trees of life.
For the wonder of new love
may be moving towards its coming to birth.
Christ will come.
The Word of God will not fail us.

Keep awake!
For the shadows of our doubts will be lifted
and the singing is sounding in the distance.
Christ will come
The Word of God will not fail us.

In the Spirit of Advent
we watch for signs of that which is to come.
we look for them here in this place
held within our midst in promises of joy.
Come, gracious Jesus, come.

Even as we begin the waiting
and the hoping for the coming of Christ,
Let us look for the small signs of hope
which have been given to us.
In the silence and reflection of this day let us look for them.

WE LISTEN TO THE WORD OF GOD FROM ISAIAH

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.
He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.
Righteousness will be his belt
and faithfulness the sash around his waist.
The wolf will live with the lamb,
the leopard will lie down with the goat,
the calf and the lion and the yearling^[a] together;
and a little child will lead them.
The cow will feed with the bear,
their young will lie down together,
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.
The infant will play near the cobra's den,
and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest.
They will neither harm nor destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.
In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the
peoples.

PUT PEACE INTO EACH OTHER'S HANDS – FRED KAAN

Put peace into each other's hands
and like a treasure hold it;
protect it like a candle flame,
with tenderness enfold it.

Put peace into each other's hands
with loving expectation;
be gentle in your words and ways,
in touch with God's creation.

Put peace into each other's hands,
like bread we break for sharing;
look people warmly in the eye:
our life is meant for caring.

As at communion, shape your hands
into a waiting cradle;
the gift of Christ receive, revere,
united round the table.

Put Christ into each other's hands,
he is love's deepest measure;
in love make peace, give peace a chance
and share it like a treasure.



Reflection Laura Stotesbury

The reflection from Laura is available to download from Cliftondiocese.com.

Play the video here.

Questions for Conversation

What struck you about Laura's reflection and what key message will you take away?

Laura speaks of there areas of life where she prays for peace; peace in our world, peace in our lives and peace in our hearts. Which of these is most important to you and why? Is there something you can do to bring about peace in this specific area?

In what ways are you or could you be 'an instrument of peace' this Advent?

When you have finished your conversation re-read the Scripture passage again. You may like to finish your time of reflection with some silent prayer and then say together 'Put Peace into Each Other's Hands'. This can also be sung to the tune of an Irish melody – St. Columba (Erin).

Final Prayer

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me bring love.
Where there is offense, let me bring pardon.
Where there is discord, let me bring union.
Where there is error, let me bring truth.
Where there is doubt, let me bring faith.
Where there is despair, let me bring hope.
Where there is darkness, let me bring your light.
Where there is sadness, let me bring joy.
O Master, let me not seek as much

to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love,
for it is in giving that one receives,
it is in self-forgetting that one finds,
it is in pardoning that one is pardoned,
it is in dying that one is raised to eternal life.



