



ADVENT REFLECTIONS FOR 2019

Week Three



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 ENTERING THE SILENCE

Prayer for Advent

Let the world hold its breath,
for good is coming in all its vulnerable newness.
Deep within our life a wonder is conceived,
hidden in humanity's moments of faithfulness.
Look for it, for it is near.
Believe in it, for it is of God.
Be ready to nurture its life among us,
for it is a precious gift for all history.

Holy God, this is earth's quiet season, the season of waiting.
WE REST IN THE SHELTER OF YOUR LOVE.

This is the season of darkness, when we seek stars to guide us.
WE TRUST IN THE LIGHT OF YOUR PROMISE.

This is the season of solitude, when we listen for our own
heart's rhythm.
WE FIND WARMTH IN THE SIGNS OF YOUR PRESENCE.

This is our season to make room, a time to make ready
**FOR WE SHALL JOIN IN THE ANGEL'S CHORUS,
PEACE ON EARTH, GOOD WILL TO ALL.**

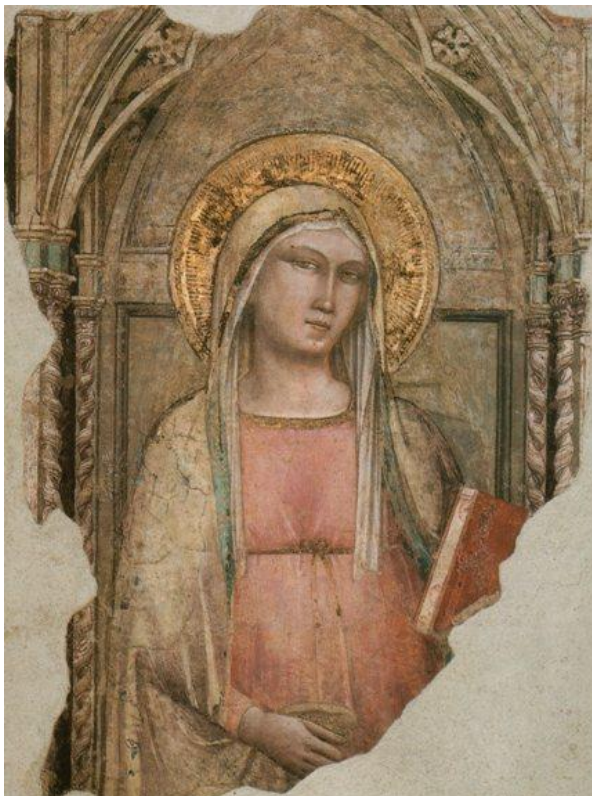


WE LISTEN TO THE WORD OF GOD FROM MATTHEW

Jesus said, “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

WORDS FROM ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS

The Virgin, weighed
with the Word of God
comes down the road
if only you'll shelter her.



Mary was open to the word of God and accepted the invitation to mother Jesus. She put aside her fears, trusted in the Spirit and believed that it would be done to her according to the Word. ‘Every valley will be lifted up, and every hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level.’ We share in Mary’s experience as she travels the hill country to visit

Elizabeth and there, glimpse Mary's delight when she says, 'My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God.'

We too are invited on that same journey of setting aside our fears and boldly mothering God into our world. What is the Good News I can bring to a world so troubled by war and fear? What is the hope I can bring to people who are weighed down by despair? What is the joy I can bring to those who mourn? What is the light I can bring to those who walk in the shadow of darkness?

Reflection : Fr. Tom Dubois

The reflection from Fr. Tom can be downloaded from Cliftondiocese.com. Listen to it now.

Questions for Conversation

What struck you about Fr. Tom's reflection and what was a significant point for you?

How does one prepare for the coming of Jesus? How does one, as it were, make space to become the womb 'weighed with the Word of God'? What most helps you to enter into this advent season?

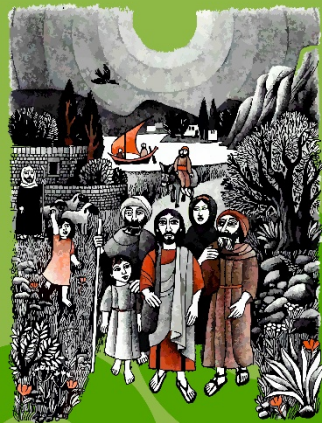
Do you have times of silence in your prayer life, and if so, what does this do for you? What are some of the fears, challenges and obstacles that we have to times of silence?

Following on from your conversation re-read the Scripture passage again. You may like to finish your time of reflection with a time of silence or intercession after which you might pray the **Hail Mary or the Angelus.**

Final Prayer

Bless to us, O God
the doors we open,
the thresholds we cross,
the roads that lie before us.
Go with us as we go
and welcome us home.





WHERE TWO OR
THREE MEET IN MY
NAME I AM THERE
AMONG THEM

MATTHEW 18:20

A FUTURE
FULL OF HOPE
CLIFTON DIOCESE

COMMUNION