

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the year, we have deepened in the whole life of Jesus. We prayed as well with His life being formed in us and in others. Now, as we enter Advent, we are invited to reflect on the year's journey. To stop, look back and read through the riches of our personal experiences in the light of expectant waiting for the Lord. What does Advent mean in this phase of my life? What am I deeply expecting and hoping for?

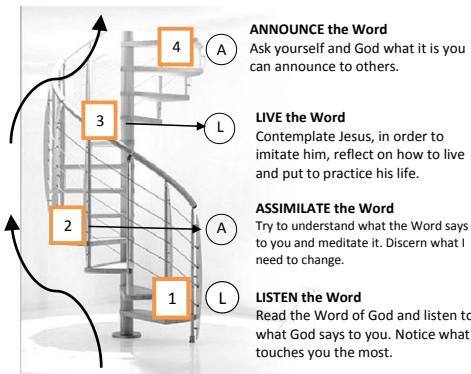
In our Catechism, it says, "When the Church celebrates *the liturgy of Advent* each year, she makes present this ancient expectancy of the Messiah, for by sharing in the long preparation for the Savior's first coming, the faithful renew their ardent desire for his second coming." (CCC #524).

True enough, this celebration unites us to our personal pilgrimage. In the reality that I live now, what did the Lord promise me? What are the specific life experiences that I have lived?

In the same way that the Israelites journeyed to enter into the promise of God for them, we too embark a journey of waiting for the promise of the Lord to be fulfilled. As human beings caught up in a society where everything is a click away or everything is fast and easy results, waiting is not easy. In those moments when we are beset by human limitations, crossroads, relationship conflicts, believing in the promise that God gave is a challenge. Sometimes, we question His promise, His presence, and complaints come quite often.

However, Pope Francis in his message of Advent in 2013 encourages us and says, "The time of Advent that we begin again today returns us to the horizon of hope, a hope that does not disappoint because it is founded on the Word of God. A hope that does not disappoint, simply because the Lord never disappoints! He is faithful." This remains true until today, may our hearts not grow weary and continue hoping in Him. May through our personal experience of Advent lead others to a joyful and expectant waiting for the Lord and put our hope in Him.

DYNAMISM OF THE WORD



MONDAY

Reflect on my personal experience of Advent

I will remember your great deeds, LORD; I will recall the wonders you did in the past.

¹²I will think about all that you have done; I will meditate on all your mighty acts.¹³Everything you do, O God, is holy. No god is as great as you. ¹⁴You are the God who works

miracles; you showed your might among the nations.¹⁵By your power you saved your people, the descendants of Jacob and of Joseph.. (Psalm 77:11-15)

As we look at the year that has passed, we enter into the process of how God fulfills the promises He has made. In your life, what did God promise you?

What is your personal journey of Advent- the journey of fulfilling His promise?

TUESDAY

Advent entails an internal preparation

It was the fifteenth year of the rule of Emperor Tiberius; Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip was ruler of the territory of Iturea and Trachonitis; Lysanias was ruler of Abilene, ²and Annas and Caiaphas were High Priests. At that time the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the desert. ³So John went throughout the whole territory of the Jordan River, preaching, "Turn away from your sins and be baptized, and God will forgive your sins." ⁴As it is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah:

"Someone is shouting in the desert: '**Get the road ready for the Lord; make a straight path for him to travel!**'⁵Every valley must be filled up, every hill and mountain leveled

off. The winding roads must be made straight, and the rough paths made smooth.⁶The whole human race will see God's salvation!" (Luke 3:1-6)

As we journey through our personal experience of Advent, we notice that we pass through many different experiences in life. Sometimes joyful, challenging and even unexpected. In this journey, what are the virtues that God is building in you that prepares the way for His promise to be fulfilled?

WEDNESDAY

Advent teaches me to wait

I wait eagerly for the LORD's help, and in his word I trust.⁶I wait for the Lord more eagerly than sentries wait for the dawn— than sentries wait for the dawn.⁷Israel, **trust in the LORD**, because **his love is constant** and he is always willing to save.⁸He will save his people Israel from all their sins. (Psalm 130:5-8)

Advent is a Church celebration that reminds us the value of waiting. Waiting in the contemporary world is oftentimes ignored because it is often perceived as unproductivity and losing valuable time. However, if we practice waiting, we earn the virtues of patience and trust in God. To trust in His love and providence.

THURSDAY

Advent is a waiting of joyful expectation

When the LORD brought us back to Jerusalem, it was like a dream! ²How we laughed, how we sang for joy! Then the other nations said about us, "The LORD did great things for them."³**Indeed he did great things for us; how happy we were!**⁴LORD, make us prosperous again, just as the rain brings water back to dry riverbeds.⁵Let those who wept as they planted their crops, gather the harvest with joy!⁶Those who wept as they went out carrying the seed will come back singing for joy, as they bring in the harvest. (Psalm 126:1-6)

When we realize the hand of God in the midst of all that we live and go through, we experience a profound peace and joy that the world cannot give. We surrender to the givens of life – both the pleasing and what's not. We recognize that indeed, God works for good to those who love Him.(Romans 8:28)

FRIDAY

Advent is to trust and to hope in God's ways and time

¹³When God promised Abraham and his descendants that the world would belong to him, he did so, not because Abraham obeyed the Law, but

because **he believed and was accepted as righteous by God.** ¹⁴For if what God promises is to be given to those who obey the Law, then faith means nothing and God's promise is worthless.¹⁵The Law brings down God's anger; but where there is no law, there is no disobeying of the law.

¹⁶And so the promise was based on faith...¹⁹He was then almost one hundred years old; but **his faith did not weaken** when he thought of his body, which was already practically dead, or of the fact that Sarah could not have children. ²⁰**His faith did not leave him, and he did not doubt God's promise; his faith filled him with power, and he gave praise to God.** ²¹**He was absolutely sure that God would be able to do what he had promised.** ²²That is why Abraham, through faith, "was accepted as righteous by God." ²³The words "he was accepted as righteous" were not written for him alone. ²⁴They were written also for us who are to be accepted as righteous, who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from death. ²⁵Because of our sins he was given over to die, and he was raised to life in order to put us right with God. (Romans 4:13-16;19-25)

In the Bible, we can see people who have made their personal journey of Advent. Abraham is one of them. His personal experience of Advent led him to a deeper experience of faith. What

does your personal experience of Advent teach you or lead you?

SATURDAY

Advent is to hope in Someone who doesn't disappoint us.

Now that we have been put right with God through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ²He has brought us by faith into this experience of God's grace, in which we now live. And so we boast of the hope we have of sharing God's glory! ³We also boast of our troubles, because we know that trouble produces endurance, ⁴endurance brings God's approval, and his approval creates hope. ⁵**This hope does not disappoint us, for God has poured out his love into our hearts** by means of the Holy Spirit, who is God's gift to us. (Romans 5:1-5)

May we share our conviction of the Promise whom our hope rests – Jesus Christ.

SUNDAY

2nd Sunday of Advent

1st Reading: Baruch 5:1-9

Responsorial Psalm 126:1-6

2nd Reading: Phil 1:4-6;8-11

Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

Verbum Dei

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

I Wait Eagerly for the LORD

November 30 – December 6, 2015

General Theme: Expectant and joyful waiting for the Lord
General Objective: To enter in a personal experience of Advent



Objective of the week:

To reflect on the year's journey of expectant waiting for the promise of God to be fulfilled