

First Sunday in Advent

Use some or all of this reflection to help guide your personal journey through this week of Advent

Reflect

Prepare to wait and move at the speed of love!

How will you move into this time of advent?

There's so much to do.

SO much to prepare.

And the pace of life is frantic anyway!

Can you imagine being like the prophets who waited for years for the promises of God to be made human? Can you wait with Mary?

God's love is slow. Indeed, love is slow.

Love doesn't work at a fast pace.

It takes its time. It takes patience and it takes attention.

The prophets waited. They attended to what God said -in a burning bush, from the sky, from the wind, behind the cleft of a rock. Not easy to catch; but they waited and hoped and believed and attended to the "voice of thin silence" that called and promised.

Mary opened herself to a completely unexpected, and unsettling way. Then she carried the promise for nine months.

Can you listen, can you wait, can you carry HOPE at the pace of LOVE, through this season of advent?

Read

Isaiah 2: 1-5 2

1. This is what Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem:
2. In the last days the mountain of the Lord's temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will stream to it.
3. Many peoples will come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.' The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.
4. He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation nor will they train for war anymore.
5. Come, descendants of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the Lord.

Romans 13: 8-10

8. Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law.
9. The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not covet," and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbour as yourself."
10. Love does no harm to a neighbour. Therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law.

Ponder

- How do you want to approach advent? Not Christmas, not preparing for Christmas but *How can you be in this time of waiting AND moving at the speed of love?*
- What makes waiting hard for you?
- What is on your heart and in your mind at this time – things you hope for, people you love, the world in need.
Can you imagine holding them as you wait?
- What might happen if you attend to the voice of God – the voice of thin silence, in a slow, loving dance, simply waiting, even if you "hear" nothing?

Do

This week as you begin the advent season, marked by waiting and living at the speed of love, can you open your self to one "new" or even an old way of being with God, of waiting, of loving?

Could you commit to that being a daily or weekly practice for advent?

Some options might be:

- If you have a daily/weekly prayer practice, could you do that at a different time of the day – or add something at a different time?
 - Could you plan a regular midday time where you sit and simply "wait" for 10 minutes...wherever you are, whatever else you are doing?
 - Could you take some time each evening to write something about the day and what waiting feels like.
 - Once a week could you reflect on the times in the week you've loved and perhaps celebrate that "love has its own speed" that has woven itself into your loving.

Prayer

Creator, lover and coming Hope, may I live this week aware of whatever distracts me, whatever makes me restless. Help me, guiding Spirit to wait; however that is for me this week. Guide me to live at the pace of love.

With Mary can we say:

May it be to me as you will!

Listen

Here are some songs that you may like to listen to as you reflect on the week. Three very different pieces.

Gurumul Wiyathul

https://youtu.be/MNBTT20aDIQ?si=GI6uearZ4DTEBJ_c

Two scrub fowl crying out, looking for Guwalilna
the calls like woman crying, looking for Murrurnawu
the cries returning his mind to the jungles at Mutlwutjna

oh place Guwalilna, Warradika, Yumayna, m.m

Oh the old man cries from the drink
oh dad Kamba-Djunadjuna, home Mayan-naraka bright in his mind
oh my two mums, beloved mums, hold Ruypu Milinditj
oh my two mums, beloved mums, cry for the sacred spring Burarrapu
oh the place Guwalilna, Warradika, Yumayna, m.m

Arvo Part *The deer's cry*

<https://youtu.be/Ir3htl3UIBk?si=9MYaJt54OytyPa1D>

Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,
Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down,
Christ in me, Christ when I arise,
Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me,
Christ with me.

Caroline Cobb *We wait for you*

<https://youtu.be/mjmul9Pnjeo?si=ewcUBp94hthv4DXu>

Verse 1:

A broken mirror, painted black
There is no light reflected back
Thorns grow up where there was green
All sorrow, shame and broken things

Paradise has barred its doors
Its guarded by the flaming swords
We can't go back, we can't go back

Chorus:

We wait, we wait for You

Come with your light
We wait, we wait

Verse 2:

A forest cut down by the axe
Like the end of the story
When it's all turned to ash
But up from the stump, the bud of a flower
A seed of hope in the eleventh hour

And from the shadow the sun will rise
The people in darkness will see a great light We're longing, praying for the dawn

Chorus:

We wait, we wait for You
Come with your light
We wait, we wait for You
Come with your light
We wait, we wait

Verse 3:

He takes the thorns upon His head
His body pierced, His arms outstretched
Says "It is finished," and the sun went down
We laid His body in the ground

But life oh life comes bursting forth
And paradise swings wide its doors
Our King will rise to take His throne
And He will return to lead us home
To dry every tear and right every wrong
How long, O Lord? How long? How long?

Chorus 2:

We wait, we wait for You
Come with Your light
We wait, we wait for You
Come with Your light
We wait, we wait for You
Come with Your light
We wait, we wait for You
Come with Your light
We wait, we wait
We wait, we wait
We wait, we wait
For You