



Awakened by Light: An Advent Journey

Advent is a season of watching, waiting, and preparing our hearts for the coming of Christ—the Light that no darkness can overcome. These short daily reflections are designed to draw your attention to that light as it appears in Scripture, in your surroundings, and within your own life.

Each day's reflection concludes with two invitations:

- **Where did you see the light today?** A brief prompt to notice God's presence—whether in joy, challenge, silence, or surprise.
- **Whisper Prayer:** A one-line prayer to carry in your heart as you go.

Together, these reflections are not just about arriving at Christmas. They are a way of walking with Christ as He draws near—and letting His light awaken something new in you along the way.

First Sunday of Advent

Matthew 24:37-44

"Therefore stay awake! For you do not know on which day your Lord will come."

Reflection

This time of year, everything competes for our attention—and yet we're also a little sleepy, a little weary, from the season's endless expectations. So it's fitting that Jesus begins Advent with a jolt: a call to wake up. He's not trying to scare us. He's turning on the light so we can see where we're going. Even if we have to squint at first, it's a mercy—a chance to prepare not just for Christmas, but for eternity.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

How do you hope Advent will shine light into your everyday life? More prayer? A clearer sense of God's nearness?

Whisper-Prayer

Jesus, I may not feel ready for the light. Help my spiritual eyes adjust so I can prepare for You.



Monday of the First Week of Advent

Matthew 8:5-11

"Amen, I say to you, in no one in Israel have I found such faith."

Reflection

Sometimes it takes an outside perspective to awaken us to the truth. Today, Jesus meets a Roman centurion who believes so deeply in His authority that he knows Jesus doesn't even need to be physically present to heal. That kind of bold, expectant faith makes Jesus pause—and marvel. His response is a promise: *everyone* who comes in faith has a place at the banquet.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

Did someone outside your usual circle reveal something true or good to you—maybe even without realizing it? Sometimes light reaches us from the edges.

Whisper-Prayer:

Lord, I am not worthy to have you enter under my roof; only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Tuesday of the First Week of Advent

Luke 10:21-24

"...for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike."

Reflection

Advent invites quiet and waiting, but the world around us is loud and glittering. Children seem made for this season of lights—and maybe that's the point. Jesus reminds us that it's not sophistication or a theology degree that helps us see God's plan unfolding, but wonder. When we make space for that childlike spirit, we begin to see more clearly the joy He's already revealing.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

What small thing caught your attention today and made you feel a flicker of joy or wonder? Don't dismiss it—it might be light breaking through.

Whisper-Prayer

Lord, open my eyes more and more to the wonder of your salvation.



Memorial of Saint Francis Xavier, Priest / Wednesday of the First Week of Advent

Matthew 15:29-37

They all ate and were satisfied.

Reflection

After three days of healing the blind, lame, deformed, mute, and others, Jesus and everyone around Him was hungry. Seven loaves and a few fish were all they had—and yet, Jesus laid out a banquet for them, and *they all ate and were satisfied*. There were even leftovers. This Gospel reading reminds us of the saving banquet of the Eucharist. It not only satisfies our spiritual hunger; it is visible, tangible proof of God's love for us in sending His Son. This is the Light that shines for us, from the manger-crib to the Cross.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

Look back on a moment today when your heart felt full—perhaps after a meal, a conversation, or a quiet pause. Let that fullness echo the abundance of God's love.

Whisper-Prayer

Bread of Life, You satisfy me with more than I knew I needed.

Thursday of the First Week of Advent

Matthew 7:21, 24-27

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the Kingdom of heaven."

Reflection

Sometimes the words of Jesus catch us off guard. We want the Jesus who says "Good job" or "You tried your best"—and we do hear those words in the Gospels. But sometimes Jesus just gets real with us. Today's Gospel reminds us it isn't enough to say, "Lord, Lord," if we're not interested in actually listening to His teaching and living it out. Jesus invites us to turn on that bright light in our hearts, so we can set our spiritual house firmly on the rock.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

Was there a moment when you knew the right thing to do—even if it wasn't easy? That clarity is light. Honor it.

Whisper-Prayer

Jesus, give me the grace to build my life on You—and not just my words.



Friday of the First Week of Advent

Matthew 9:27-31

"Do you believe that I can do this?" "Yes, Lord," they said to him.

Reflection:

Today's Gospel offers the flip side of yesterday's reading. Two blind men, following Jesus, beg Him for healing. And they aren't just saying the right words—they're acting on their belief. Jesus keeps walking toward His destination, and they follow as best they can, calling out for His mercy. Only when Jesus reaches His destination does He turn to address them. Their persistence, despite the difficulty, demonstrates their faith. And their eyes were opened—and they saw the Light.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

Have you kept following Jesus through spiritual darkness or silence? What helped you persevere?

Whisper-Prayer

Jesus, I believe—help me keep following You, even when I cannot see.

Saturday of the First Week of Advent

Matthew 9:35-10:1, 5a, 6-8

At the sight of the crowds, his heart was moved with pity for them because they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd.

Reflection

As Christians, we often feel a sense of pride and mission when we hear today's Gospel: "The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few." It is our commission today as much as it was in Jesus' time. But the call to this mission comes straight from Jesus' tender heart. The crowds were troubled and abandoned. They needed Him. Before we run forward to bring people in, let us pause and pray that the tender heart of Jesus might break open our own hearts to the need.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

Who in your life is "troubled and abandoned"? How is Jesus inviting you to see them through His eyes?

Whisper-Prayer

Jesus, move my heart with pity for the lost and forgotten.



Second Sunday of Advent

Matthew 3:1-12

"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"

Reflection

Repentance is something we don't talk about much these days. It's a concept that has fallen out of favor. To the modern ear it is too much about regret and shame. And yet, every Advent we hear the Baptist's words, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" Why would the Church want to make us feel badly, especially this time of year, we might moan. But at the heart of this word is the theme of renewal and hope, not impoverishment. We're called, still, to change direction, to walk toward the light and what will ultimately save us, and away from what keeps us bound.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

Did you feel a gentle nudge to turn back toward God? What might He be inviting you to leave behind?

Whisper-Prayer

Jesus, turn my heart toward the light that saves.

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary / Monday of the Second Week of Advent

Luke 1:26-38

"He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High."

Reflection

On the day we celebrate Mary's immaculate conception, the Gospel reading is the story of the annunciation of Jesus. And it is fitting. The Church is reminding us why it was so important for Mary to be immaculately conceived, preserved from the stain of original sin: "He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High..." Only the most pure could give birth to the second person of the Trinity.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

Did something today point you toward purity, beauty, or readiness? Did you sense Mary's quiet strength?

Whisper-Prayer

Mary, conceived without sin, pray for me, that I may be a worthy dwelling place for Christ.



Tuesday of the Second Week of Advent

Matthew 18:12-14

"In just the same way, it is not the will of your heavenly Father that one of these little ones be lost."

Reflection

Today's Gospel is a familiar one, and we often think about the "lost sheep" we as a Church are called to go out in search of. But we are also part of the flock, and even we can tend to stray, have moments of doubt, decide to go our own way. The shepherd in this parable reflects the heart of God. Whether the sheep was the strongest, the weakest, or the most ordinary—he would have gone in search of it because each one mattered to him. This speaks to God's deep, personal love for us. He knows each of us individually, and pursues us out of that love.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

When did you feel sought out, noticed, or deeply known?

Whisper-Prayer

Good Shepherd, find me when I wander.

Wednesday of the Second Week of Advent

Matthew 11:28-30

"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest.."

Reflection

There is an interesting paradox in today's Gospel reading. At first we hear Jesus telling the crowds that in him we can find rest from our labor and our burdens. A comfort any time but especially during Advent when our load may seem even heavier. But to find that rest he invites us to take his yoke, to carry his burden. Rest for a disciple is to work alongside Jesus, in meekness, in humility, bringing others into that same rest.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

Was there a moment of unexpected rest—or a reminder that you don't carry your burden alone?

Whisper-Prayer

Jesus, let me walk beside You and rest in Your strength.



Thursday of the Second Week of Advent

Matthew 11:11-15

"Amen, I say to you, among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

Reflection

Jesus wasn't a flatterer. He wasn't praising John the Baptist just to make him feel important. He was acknowledging his role in history—the history that was happening right then, at the time—and what was to come, after John was beheaded. "The least in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than he." And that means all Christians. Why? Because we possess what he pronounced: belief in Jesus as Son and savior.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

How has your life been changed because you believe Jesus is the Christ?

Whisper-Prayer

Jesus, thank You for calling me into the Kingdom.

Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe / Friday of the Second Week of Advent

Luke 1:26-38

"Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word."

Reflection

In that close, one-on-one conversation between Mary and the angel Gabriel, Mary is told that she has been chosen out of all women, and in all time, to bear the Son of God. It is a light-filled moment—the turning point for all humankind. We hold our breath waiting for what could come next. And this young Jewish girl responds, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." It wasn't to be an easy or effortless task. There would be tears, and blood. But Mary understood that she was the one chosen, and her trust in God's unfailing love led to our ultimate salvation.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

Can you name one quiet, courageous "yes" you've said to God lately?

Whisper Prayer

Mary, light-bearer and mother of trust, pray for us to follow your yes with our own.



Memorial of Saint Lucy, Virgin and Martyr / Saturday of the Second Week of Advent

Matthew 17:9a, 10-13

"So also will the Son of Man suffer at their hands."

Reflection:

In today's Gospel, the disciples—fresh from witnessing the transfiguration—are curious about the appearance of Elijah on the mountaintop. Now they are coming down the mountain, literally and figuratively, to face what's coming next. The vision of Jesus transfigured by light was given to strengthen them. This short conversation is part of their battle-readiness plan. Jesus explains that the authorities did not see that John had come in the spirit of Elijah, and they beheaded him. "So also will the Son of Man suffer at their hands." They need to be ready. And so do we. This is one of Advent's sobering moments: the Babe in the manger will suffer at the hands of those He came to save.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

Where do you need strength to follow Christ into difficulty?

Whisper Prayer

Jesus, Light of the world, help me not to look away when your path leads through suffering.

Third Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday)

Matthew 11:2-11

"Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them."

Reflection

John wasn't expecting this. He was expecting a fierce, military leader—someone who would bust some heads and make some waves. So when he sends his men to ask Jesus if He's really "the one," Jesus replies with words John likely knew well, drawn mostly from Isaiah. It's not about winning a war, John. It's about winning souls. It's about healing minds, hearts, and bodies. It's about proclaiming good news to the poor. This is the Kingdom John was sent to announce—a revolutionary idea then, maybe even more so now.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

How might God be calling you to recognize the Kingdom in unexpected ways?



Whisper Prayer

Jesus, surprise me today with your quiet, healing joy.

Monday of the Third Week of Advent

Matthew 21:23-27

"By what authority are you doing these things? And who gave you this authority?"

Reflection

The chief priests and elders were perhaps like some modern-day authorities we've encountered—very focused on keeping power firmly in their control and making sure everyone knows who's in charge. So it's not surprising that when Jesus came through, clearing out the temple and healing people, their feathers were ruffled. When they challenge him—*Who do you think you are?*—Jesus responds with a question of his own: *Where was John's baptism from?* They can't answer without undermining themselves, so they say nothing. For a moment, their illusion of power dims beneath the brighter light of Christ's authority. To fully prepare for Christ's coming, it's important for us to consider our own understanding—and acceptance—of his true identity as the Son of God.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

What part of your heart still resists giving Christ authority? What might shift if you gave him more?

Whisper-Prayer

Jesus, help me yield to your authority with trust, not fear. You are gentle with power, and you use it to heal.

Tuesday of the Third Week of Advent

Matthew 21:28-32

"Which of these two did the father's will?"

Reflection

This parable, spoken to the chief priests and elders, is both a biting correction and a tender plea. Two sons are asked by their father to work in the vineyard. One says no, but later goes. The other agrees to go, but does not. "Which of these two did the father's will?" Jesus asks. "The first," they reply—and instantly realize they've condemned themselves. Like the first son, the outcasts in their society had once said no to God, but listened to John and repented. But the religious leaders, like the second son, claimed to say "yes" to God but refused to turn their hearts.



Jesus loves even those who seek to silence him. His mercy is wide enough to hold both sons—and us. May we step more fully into the light of obedience and grace.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

Have you ever said no to God, but found your heart drawn back toward him? Where is he calling you to follow through today?

Whisper-Prayer

Lord, give me the grace to mean what I say—and the humility to repent when I fall short.

Wednesday of the Third Week of Advent

Matthew 1:1-17

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Reflection

Men and women, the famous and the forgotten, the flawed and the faithful—this is the family tree of Jesus. In his time, a person's identity was tied directly to their lineage. This list told readers that Jesus was Jewish, descended from Abraham and David, born into the story God had been writing for generations.

Today reminds us that God was working out his plan with meticulous care. There was a steady, quiet progression toward the birth of Christ—at the exact right time in history, with exactly the ancestry God intended. To the one who is outside of time, the path was never unclear. His steady gaze is a quiet light, tracing every branch of our own story.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

Where can you trace the quiet patterns of God's presence in your life—looking back or looking around?

Whisper-Prayer

Lord, even when I feel like a small, nameless part of the story, help me trust that I matter to you.



Thursday of the Third Week of Advent

Matthew 1:18-25

When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home.

Reflection

The Gospels don't record a single word spoken by Joseph. But his actions show why he was chosen to protect Mary and the Christ child. From the beginning, the situation was difficult. By all appearances, Mary had conceived a child that wasn't his. Joseph resolved to end their engagement quietly, to spare her shame.

Then the angel came in a dream with a remarkable message: the child in Mary's womb was from the Holy Spirit. He would save his people from their sins. And when Joseph awoke, he didn't hesitate. He took Mary into his home. Silent, strong, and obedient—Joseph's faith didn't need words.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

Have you ever obeyed without full understanding? How did God meet you in that surrender?

Whisper-Prayer

Saint Joseph, help me trust God's voice, even when it comes in silence or dreams.

Friday of the Third Week of Advent

Luke 1:5-25

Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall name him John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord.

Reflection

Zechariah and Elizabeth were righteous in the eyes of God. They lived out their faith—quietly, faithfully, together. Most likely, they had long accepted their infertility, and continued to serve and trust God anyway. Until.

Until the angel appeared to Zechariah and told him they would bear a son. His name would be John. This long-hoped-for child would grow to be a herald of the Light.

Zechariah questioned it. His doubt surfaced in the face of the miraculous—and God gave him nine months of silence to reflect. But the plan didn't change. A baby was on the way.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

What long-settled place in your life do you need God to reawaken with wonder?

**Whisper-Prayer**

God of the unexpected, help me believe that it's never too late for you to move.

Saturday of the Third Week of Advent

Luke 1:26-38

And coming to her, he said, "Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you!"

Reflection

The choice of Mary to be the mother of the Savior wasn't random—though it may have seemed so at the time. Mary likely appeared to be just a normal young Jewish girl, raised to hear Scripture read, to keep the commandments, to visit the temple, and to pray. But when Gabriel arrives, we are given to understand that she is special—favored by God and chosen for this moment.

"The Lord is with you" isn't a casual greeting. It's a declaration of divine accompaniment—God will strengthen Mary and make her capable of the impossible. Her seemingly ordinary life of faith became a foundation God could build upon. God's light finds a home in humble hearts.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

Where in my own life of faith—however quiet or unremarkable it may seem—is God preparing to shine?

Whisper Prayer:

Lord, help me live a life so anchored in You that when You call me, I am ready. Make me attentive, humble, and full of grace.



Fourth Sunday of Advent

Matthew 1:18-24

Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means "God is with us."

Reflection

As Christmas draws near, the Gospel might begin to feel repetitive. Why do we hear again the story of Mary's conception, Joseph's plans, and the angel's visit? Perhaps it's meant to be that way—like a steady drumbeat we're meant to absorb deep into our hearts.

The virgin shall conceive. The child shall be called Emmanuel. *God is with us.*

This is the center of everything: the incarnation is our salvation. It is the light that enters our darkness and stays with us.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

How does God's nearness—in this story and in my own life—change how I see today?

Whisper Prayer

Emmanuel, draw near to me. Let Your light dwell with me and guide every part of my life.

Monday of the Fourth Week of Advent

Luke 1:46-56

"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord."

Reflection

Today, let us simply dwell in Mary's own words, lifted from the heart of a young woman who trusted God with her whole life. The Magnificat is a song of light rising in the darkness—of God's mercy, justice, and strength.

Let it be our prayer, too.

"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;

my spirit rejoices in God my savior.

for he has looked upon his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed:



the Almighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his Name.

He has mercy on those who fear him
in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm,
and has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones
and has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel
for he remembered his promise of mercy,
the promise he made to our fathers,
to Abraham and his children for ever.”

Where Did You See the Light Today?

Which part of Mary’s song speaks to my heart today? Why?

Whisper Prayer

God of mercy, help me echo Mary’s joy and trust. May my soul, too, proclaim Your greatness.



Tuesday of the Fourth Week of Advent

Luke 1:57-66

He asked for a tablet and wrote, "John is his name," and all were amazed.

Reflection

Elizabeth and Zechariah knew their baby's name long before the day of circumcision. The angel of the Lord had told Zechariah that they were to name the child John, which means *Yahweh has been gracious*. So when the gathered friends and family looked to him to confirm Elizabeth's announcement, he wrote decisively: *John is his name*. And the light of a new beginning was already burning.

At once, his mouth was opened, and he began to praise God. Awe fell upon everyone. The break with tradition—the unexpected name—seemed far less important than the clear sense that God was at work. The people began to wonder, What, then, will this child be?

Something new was dawning.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

Where do I see God's light in the unexpected?

Whisper Prayer

Jesus, Light of the World, open my eyes to the ways you are moving in grace, even when it doesn't follow the script.

Wednesday of the Fourth Week of Advent / Mass in the Morning

Luke 1:67-79

"In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us, to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace."

Reflection

The *Canticle of Zechariah*, also known as the *Benedictus*, holds a special place in the daily prayer of the Church. It is sung or recited each morning in the Liturgy of the Hours—an anchor for our hearts as we begin each day.

These words, spoken by Zechariah after months of silence, anticipate the arrival of Jesus, the *dawn from on high*. In this last day of Advent, we can feel the darkness beginning to lift. The long wait is almost over. The Light is near now—guiding our feet into the way of peace.

**Where Did You See the Light Today?**

Where in my life am I longing for dawn? How might God be preparing to meet me there?

Whisper Prayer:

Jesus, my Light, guide my feet into the way of peace. Let me walk toward You with hope.

Nativity of the Lord / Mass at Dawn

Luke 2:15-20

So they went in haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger.

Reflection

Advent can often seem like the fastest four weeks of the year. Suddenly, we're standing at the manger, out of breath and in awe, like the shepherds in today's Gospel. Imagine these simple men racing through Bethlehem, searching its barns and stables for the one manger cradling an infant Savior born for them.

As we kneel before the manger today, we are not only beholding the miracle of Christ's birth, but also recognizing our own spiritual longing. The shepherds' joy and urgency in seeking the Savior mirror our deep desire to encounter the light of Christ in our own lives.

May we, like them, return to our daily routines "glorifying and praising God" for all we have seen and heard.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

Where have you witnessed the light of Christ breaking into your ordinary days? How can you carry that light with you as the Christmas season unfolds?

Whisper Prayer

Jesus, let me carry your light with wonder and joy.

Nativity of the Lord / Mass During the Day

John 1:1-18

The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.

Reflection

The Gospel for Christmas Mass During the Day begins not with the birth of a child in Bethlehem, or even a visit to a young Jewish girl in Nazareth. It begins at the beginning. It is the sweeping, eternal perspective on the origin, nature, and identity of Jesus—the true light, coming into a dark world.



This poetic piece of Scripture is a bit breathtaking, but it is also full of promise for those of us who believe. We have the power to become children of God. We see his glory. We have received grace and truth.

When we claim this—embracing God’s only Son and his gift—we can’t help but shine the light for others to see.

Where Did You See the Light Today?

Where have I received grace and truth this Advent? How might I carry that light into the year to come?

Whisper Prayer

Jesus, shine through me.