

WEEK TWO

Reflective Preparation

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty and merciful God, may no earthly undertaking hinder those who set out in haste to meet your Son, but may our learning of heavenly wisdom gain us admittance to his company. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

GOSPEL REFLECTION

Matthew 3:1-12

*Read and reflect on this Sunday's Gospel. Consider the reflection questions below.
Use the space provided to write down your thoughts.*

Reflection:

- **Ponder the text for a deeper meaning. Read it again as necessary.**
- **What word or phrase from the passage jumped out at you?**
- **What thoughts came to you as you were reading? What did you “hear with your heart”?**
- **To what aspect of your life does the story relate?**
- **Reflect on how you can put what you learned into action.**

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

SESSION TWO VIDEO

Watch Video Two: Reflective Preparation. Use the space below to take notes. Videos can be found at MadisonDiocese.org/Joyful or at YouTube.com/DiocesefMadison in the playlist called “Joyful Advent Study”



VIDEO REFLECTION

After watching the video, use the questions below for personal reflection and group discussion.

Mary and Elizabeth were preparing for the birth of their babies. What are some specific ways you can use this Advent to better prepare for the birth of Jesus in your heart?

What are some of the things you do to prepare your home for Christmas? Do you have any family traditions? How can you transform these activities and events to focus more on Jesus and the faith? For example, if you decorate the outside of your home, do you have a manger scene? Would someone know you were a Christian by looking at your home?

Imitating John the Baptist, how can you prepare the way for Jesus in the hearts of those around you? How are you evangelizing the people in your life by not just your words but also by how you live?

John the Baptist calls us to repent of our sins. How can you improve your practice of Confession? Do you go often enough (at least once a month)? Could you do a more thorough examination of conscience?



SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

CONFESSION

Advent is an especially important time to go to Confession because it helps us better prepare our hearts for Jesus.

Before going to Confession, pray to the Holy Spirit asking for help recognizing your sins.

Use a good examination of conscience to help you pray, reflect, and prepare.

CLOSING PRAYER

ROSARY

To conclude the session, pray the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary. Use Bishop Hying's video found at MadisonDiocese.org/Joyful

If time does not permit a full Rosary, pray a decade together.