



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.

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.