

Advent, 2020

Reflection

What are you waiting for? Depending on the tone, that question can have at least two meanings. One simply expresses a curiosity and might be answered with “the mail,” “a bus,” “a friend,” or several other possibilities. The other can sound more accusatory: “Don’t just stand there. Do something!”

We’re now in the season of Advent, a season often described as a time of waiting, but what are we waiting for? And which tone comes with the question? Could it be a little of both?

On one hand, we might say we’re waiting for Christmas, for Jesus to come anew and again into our lives, a kind of passive waiting. On the other hand, we might have to offer a more active response, and I’m not talking about decorating, writing cards, buying and wrapping gifts, or cooking and baking.

Advent can be a time of active waiting, of being alert, watching, and preparing, not just standing there, but doing something. But what are we to do, aside from all those pre-Christmas chores mentioned above? The answer might require us to think a little differently. For example, might we see ourselves not only as recipients of the commands to wait, watch, and prepare, but also as givers, not in an authoritarian way but in a helpful and supportive way. Could we not accompany others as they wait for healing or watch for loved ones or prepare for a new and uncertain future? As co-creators with Jesus, how about looking at Christmas not only as his birthday, but as his re-birth in us, a commissioning of us to carry on his work in this very needy world? Now that could take quite a bit of preparation!

Yes, let’s try to envision Advent in a new and refreshing way that transforms us and moves our world closer to the joy, peace, and love that are the promise of Christmas.

Prayer

As streets fill with shoppers
Bright lights and tempting offers
Christmas songs and children’s laughter
You lead us along a different path
To a desert river and a Prophetic voice
A call to repentance
A call to service
A call to immerse ourselves
In living water that will never run dry
A call to prepare a way in our own lives
For the Saviour of the world to enter in
To know the touch of tender mercy
And rest in your forgiving love

For your faithful prophets
And your Living Word
We give you thanks. Amen

https://www.faithandworship.com/prayers_Advent.htm#gsc.tab=0

Suggested Actions

In this time of covid-19 when there may be less demand to decorate, cook and bake, even shop for gifts and wrap them, make time, instead, for prayer, spiritual reading, and reflection.

Open yourself to God being re-born in you. Be inspired to write, call, FaceTime, Zoom, or visit if possible people who are alone and lonely.

Watch for opportunities to:

- help those in need with donations of food, clothing, or other necessities;
- sign petitions, write letters, and make phone calls to advocate for causes you believe in;
- provide financial support to nonprofits like Pax Christi Metro NY working for peace and justice.

Prepare your gift-giving with PCMNY's **anti-war toy flier** in mind to encourage the purchase of children's gifts that cultivate cooperation, creativity, and fun.

Be alert to what's happening through PCMNY's email action alert network and online at our: [website](#), [Facebook page](#), and [Twitter account](#).