

# Prepare Your Heart for Jesus This Advent

**Prepare Room at the Inn** - Your heart is where Christ wishes to dwell and Advent is the perfect time to make room in it for His presence. If your heart is filled with unforgiveness, it has no room for Christ. Begin Advent by an Examination of Conscience wherein you ask your Heavenly Father to reveal to you any unforgiveness that exists in your heart. Remember that as God has forgiven you, you are also asked to forgive others.

**Clean Out the Cobwebs** - After an Examination of Conscience where you ask God to reveal any unforgiveness that you are holding, it is important to clean out the vestiges of cobwebs that may still be lurking in the dark corners of your heart. This means that you should make a point of getting to Confession during Advent. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is an important part of preparing your heart for Jesus; this is because the priest acts in the person of Christ in helping you identify the cobwebs that you may not be seeing on your own—typically those ones that have been hanging on for so long they no longer get your attention.

**Hang New Curtains** - The room of your heart is ready; unforgiveness and cobwebs have been cleared out. Now it is time to hang new curtains! Many of us fall into a rut in our daily lives and forget how to live in joy. You are preparing for Christ's indwelling and He abides best in those who have delight in their hearts. So throw out the old curtains of fear and despair and exhaustion and hang new curtains of hope and joy and anticipation.

**Get Out the Fine China and Set the Table** - Company is on its way! We aren't doubtfully thinking that maybe He's going to drop by and thus we're making only superficial efforts to get ready. We are certain in our belief of His arrival and every cell in our body joyfully shouts, "He's on His way!" This is the time we get the fine china out of the cupboard—our attitude is one of enthusiastic expectation. Our hearts pound in anticipation of His presence. Our fine china goes so well with our new curtains!

**Open the Front Door** - Whenever my family is expecting company, after all the preparations are complete, we open our front door and wait expectantly on our couch. We can see through the glass screen door as our company approaches. It is a time of quiet for us—all the work is finished and we are ready. So in preparing our hearts for Christ this Advent, the last step after all the prep work is to simply "be." In this state of "be-ing" we don't question how time slipped through our fingers; we don't worry if there was more we should have done. We've been good and faithful servants and are ready for Christ.

Praying the scriptures with

## WRAP

Perhaps the best way to pray with the scriptures is to follow the ancient Christian practice of *lectio divina* (divine reading), in which "the Word of God is so read and meditated that it becomes prayer." The following steps use the WRAP method, which add practical resolution to the traditional four steps of *lectio divina*.

Begin by making yourself aware of God's presence with you and His desire to speak to you. Spend a few moments preparing your heart and asking God to meet you in His word.

**STEP 1** - Start by slowly reading through the daily scripture reading, letting the words sink in and take hold. Read through the scripture passage two times. Then WRAP.

**STEP 2** - As you pray with the scripture look for key words, patterns, details and images. Write what stuck out to you.

**STEP 3** - Reflect on the word/phrase that stuck out, seek understanding for the scripture that was read.

**STEP 4** - Apply the chosen phrase to your life. Talk to God about the scripture and how it relates to you and the things that are going on in your own life.

**STEP 5** - Pray, Praise, Pause. Write a prayer to God in response, praise Him for His goodness, and pause in His presence.

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# Advent Daily Mass Readings

**1st Sunday of Advent:** Isaiah 63:16B-17, 19B; 64:2-7 — 1 Corinthians 1:3-9 — Mark 13:33-37  
December 1: Isaiah 2:1-5 — Matthew 8:5-11  
December 2: Isaiah 11:1-10 — Luke 10:21-24  
December 3: Isaiah S 25:6-10A — Matthew 15:29-37  
December 4: Isaiah 26:1-6 — Matthew 7:21, 24-27  
December 5: Isaiah 29:17-24 — Matthew 9:27-31  
December 6: Isaiah 30:19-21, 23-26 — Matthew 9:35-10:1, 5A, 6-8

**2nd Sunday of Advent:** Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11 — 2 Peter 3:8-14 — Mark 1:1-8  
December 8 Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary: Genesis 3:9-15, 20 — Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12 — Luke 1:26-38  
December 9: Isaiah 40:1-11 — Matthew 18:12-14  
December 10: Isaiah 40:25-31 — Matthew 11:28-30  
December 11: Isaiah 41:13-20 — Matthew 11:11-15  
December 12: Revelations 11:19A; 12:1-6A, 10AB — Luke 1:39-47  
December 13: Sirach 48:1-4, 9-11 — Sirach 48:1-4, 9-11

**3rd Sunday of Advent:** Isaiah 61:1-2A, 10-11 — 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 — John 1:6-8, 19-28  
December 15: Numbers 24:2-7, 15-17A — Matthew 21:23-27  
December 16: Zephaniah 3:1-2, 9-13 — Matthew 21:28-32  
December 17: Genesis 49:2, 8-10 — Matthew 1:1-17  
December 18: Matthew 1:1-17 — Matthew 1:18-25  
December 19: Judges 13:2-7, 24-25A — Luke 1:5-25  
December 20: Isaiah 7:10-14 — Luke 1:26-38

**4th Sunday of Advent:** 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8B-12, 14A, 16 — Romans 16:25-27 — Luke 1:26-38  
December 22: 1 Samuel 1:24-28 — Luke 1:46-56  
December 23: Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24 — Luke 1:57-66  
December 24: 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8B-12, 14A, 16 — Luke 1:67-79

**Christmas:** Vigil Mass: Isaiah 62:1-5 — Acts 13:16-17, 22-25 — Matthew 1:1-25  
Mass During the Night: Isaiah 9:1-6 — Titus 2:11-14 — Luke 2:1-14  
Mass at Dawn: Isaiah 62:11-12 — Titus 3:4-7 — Luke 2:15-20  
Mass During the Day (The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas): Isaiah 52:7-10 — Hebrews 1:1-6 — JN 1:1-18

## Octave of Christmas:

December 25: See Christmas Masses  
December 26: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59 — Matthew 10:17-22  
December 27: 1 John 1:1-4 — John 20:1A AND 2-8  
December 28: Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14 — Colossians 3:12-21 — LK 2:22-40  
December 29: 1 John 2:3-11 — Luke 2:22-35  
December 30: 1 John 2:12-17 — Luke 2:36-40  
December 31: 1 John 2:18-21 — John 1:1-18  
January 1: Numbers 6:22-27 — Galatians 4:4-7 — Luke 2:16-21

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December 18: Matthew 1:1-17 — Matthew 1:18-25  
December 19: Judges 13:2-7, 24-25A — Luke 1:5-25  
December 20: Isaiah 7:10-14 — Luke 1:26-38

**4th Sunday of Advent:** 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8B-12, 14A, 16 — Romans 16:25-27 — Luke 1:26-38  
December 22: 1 Samuel 1:24-28 — Luke 1:46-56  
December 23: Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24 — Luke 1:57-66  
December 24: 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8B-12, 14A, 16 — Luke 1:67-79

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