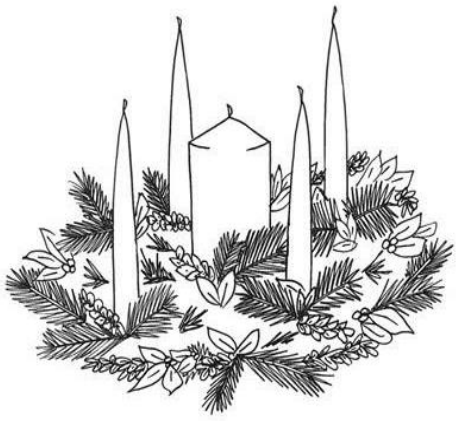
Thoughts and Prayers for Reflection

December 2026



Advent is both a beginning and an end, an alpha and an omega of the church's year of grace.
Too often considered merely a season of preparation for the annual commemoration of Christ's birth, this rich and many-layered season is actually designed to prepare the Christian for the glorious possibilities of the parousia.
It is a season of longing expectation.
"Come, Lord Jesus".

William G Storey

(d.2014)

1	May the hope of this sacred season settle in your soul. May it be a foundation of courage for you when times of distress occupy your inner land. *Joyce Rupp*
2	**Frances Perry, founder of the Royal Women's Hospital, Melburne (d.1892):** Frances Perry's world view centred on Christian morality and the duty of the church and community to respond to suffering. She linked governance and public service to the ethical standards of her faith tradition.
3	**Francis Xavier, priest and missionary (d.1552**): It is not the actual physical exertion that counts towards one's progress, nor the nature of the task, but by the spirit of faith with which it is undertaken. *St. Francis Xavier*
4	**Nicholas Ferrar, deacon and man of prayer (d.1637):** As a father has compassion for his children, so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him. For he knows how we were made; he remembers that we are dust. *Psalm 103.13-14*
5	The Lord will make you go through hard times, but he himself will be there to teach you, and you will not have to search for him anymore. If you wander off the road to the right or the left, you will hear his voice behind you, saying, "Here is the road. Follow it". *Isaiah 30.20-21*
6	**SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT:** Excite in me the joy and love and peace it is right to bring to the manger of my Lord. Raise in me, too, sober reverence for the God who acted there, hearty gratitude for the life begun there, and spirited resolution to serve the Father and Son.
7	**Ambrose of Milan, bishop and teacher (d.397):** Let your door stand open to receive God, unlock your soul to Him, offer Him a welcome in your mind, and then you will see the riches of simplicity, the treasures of peace, the joy of grace. *Ambrose of Milan*
8	**The Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary; Richard Baxter, pastor and spiritual writer (d.1691):** Tolerance is a cheap, low-grade parody of love. Tolerance is not a great virtue to aspire to. Love is much tougher and harder. *N T Wright*
9	Wisdom shines bright and never fades; she is easily discerned by those who love her, and by those who seek her she is found. *The Wisdom of Soloman 6.12*
10	Miracles do not save; the cross does. The Christian life is therefore not about what God can give us, but about receiving God himself. God's greatest gift to us is Himself.
11	This is what the Lord says - your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: "I am the Lord your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go. If only you had paid attention to my commands, your peace would have been like a river, your well-being like the waves of the sea . . ." *Isaiah 48.17-18*
12	As a father has compassion for his children, so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him. For he knows how we were made; he remembers that we are dust. *Psalm 103. 13-14*
13	**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**: **Gaudete Sunday**, from the Latin *Gaudete* ("Rejoice"). Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. *1 Thessalonians 5.16-18*
14	**John of the Cross, mystic and teacher (d.1592):** It is great wisdom to know how to be silent and to look at neither the remarks, nor the deeds, nor the lives of others. *St John of the Cross*

15	How often do we forget that our hearts are sanctuaries of the Holy One? How often do we become still enough to wonder in awe at the mystery of a God who not only died for us but sweeps away every hindrance to deep abiding union, and takes up habitation within the home of our hearts?
16	Seek the Lord and his strength; seek his presence continually. Remember the wonderful works he has done, his miracles and the judgments he has uttered. *Psalm 105.4-5*
17	O Wisdom, you come forth from the mouth of the Most High. You fill the universe and hold all things together in a strong yet gentle manner. O come to teach us the way of truth. *Advent antiphon, Celtic Daily Prayer*
18	She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins. *Matthew 1.21*
19	We all, regardless of age, are children of God. We are all, always, in a very vulnerable and needy state. Everyone is in a state of conversion, for better or ill, their entire life. *Br. Curtis Almquist*
20	**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT:** Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has look with favour on the lowliness of his servant". *Luke 1.46-48*
21	**Thomas, Apostle and Martyr:** Praise the Lord, all you nations; extol him, all you peoples. For great is his love toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever. Praise the Lord! *Psalm 117*
22	No one is holy like the Lord - no, no one except you! There is no protector like our God! *1 Samuel 2.2*
23	The invitation of these final Advent days is to believe that the God who came, still comes. In our smallness. In our waiting. In our everyday lives. So, let us prepare not just our home, but our hearts. Let us clear the clutter of fear, distraction and doubt. And in their place, let us kindle the light of hope. Christ comes, not only born in Bethlehem, but to be born in us. *Lisa McKerr*
24	*Ave verum corpus natum ex Maria Virgine.* Hail, true body of Christ, born of the Virgin Mary.
25	**THE BIRTH OF OUR LORD - CHRISTMAS DAY:** Christ is born to us today, in order that he may appear to the whole world through us. *Thomas Merton*
26	**Stephen, Deacon and Martyr:** Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. *Psalm 129.23*
27	**FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS; John, Apostle and Evangelist**: I delight greatly in the Lord; my soul rejoices in my God. *Isaiah 61.10*
28	We are not being asked to die on a literal cross, but we *are* invited to make small sacrifices for the benefit of others. And so I try again today. I try to choose forgiveness over resentment, kindness over anger, service over selfishness. *Rebecca Crouch*
29	**Thomas Becket, archbishop of Canterbury, martyr (d.1170):** My hopes are laid up within my own bosom, for he is not alone with whom the Lord is; when he falls, he shall not be dashed to pieces, for the Lord sustains him in his hand. *Thomas Becket*
30	**Josephine Butler, social reformer (d. 1905):** A faithful friend is a secure shelter; whoever finds one has found a treasure. *Ecclesiasticus 6.14*
31	**John Wyclif, teacher and reformer (d.1384):** Ability is that sufficiency which cometh from God. *John Wyclif*

Weekly Prayers and Thoughts



Sunday For in every flower, in every breeze, in every faint murmur of the valley, I seem to hear the slow, wild music of another world. *E. A. Poe*

Monday Let go of your plans. The first hour of your morning belongs to God. Tackle the day's work that he charges you with, and he will give you the power to accomplish it. *Edith Stein*

Tuesday Loving God, we open ourselves to you as we approach this Christmas season. Show us the creative power of hope. Teach us the peace that comes from justice. Fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained, but must be shared. Magnify your love within us. Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you that we may walk in the light of Christ.

Wednesday Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure. *Psalm 147:5*

Thursday The quality of mercy is not strained;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath. *William Shakespeare*

Friday Loving God, inspire me to share with others the treasures you have poured into my life. Teach me how to give – and how to give away – and to live with open hands and open heart. Amen.

Saturday The world is a place where good and evil grow side by side. Jesus does not pretend that life is simple or that everything harmful will disappear at once. Instead, he teaches that the field is God's, that good seed has been sown, and that in the end God's justice will prevail.
"The righteous will shine like the sun". *Matthew 13.43*

Thoughts for Prayer & Reflection
for our *city on a hill….* and beyond.

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