



advent's

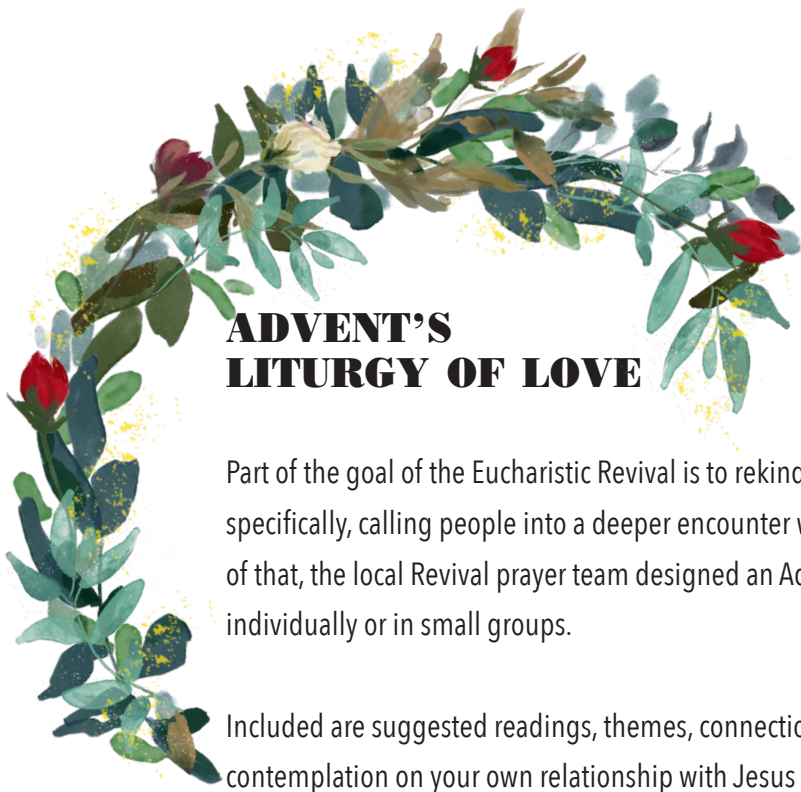
LITURGY of LOVE

4 WEEK PRAYER GUIDE AND JOURNAL



DIOCESE OF SAINT CLOUD
Eucharistic Revival





ADVENT'S LITURGY OF LOVE

Part of the goal of the Eucharistic Revival is to rekindle a living relationship with the Lord, specifically, calling people into a deeper encounter with Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. In light of that, the local Revival prayer team designed an Advent prayer journal that can be used individually or in small groups.

Included are suggested readings, themes, connections and questions designed to inspire contemplation on your own relationship with Jesus in the Mass. Whether you attend regularly, have been away from Mass or are longing for deeper connection, this simple guide is meant to be repeated each week, relying on the Holy Spirit to reveal something new each day.

INSTRUCTIONS

"And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth." – John 1:14

Advent is a time to prepare our hearts anew to celebrate the birth of Jesus. It is a time of great hope and joy. We are filled with the anticipation of something good and holy. We hear the stories of the Holy Family's sacrifice and humble journey. We are rewarded with the most precious gift of Jesus himself. How do we bring this Advent experience with us each time we celebrate the liturgy? And how do we take what we receive at Mass – Jesus himself, who dwells in us – out into the world?

Using this journal as a guide, we invite you to begin by reading the Sunday Gospel of the week on the following two pages. (You may also choose to read one or more of the daily readings at <https://bible.usccb.org/readings/calendar>). Drawing from your own feelings and experiences, ask yourself: What surprises me? What needs healing? What questions do I have? Where do I find meaning? What gives me joy? Take those thoughts into your prayer, use this space to journal, make time to discuss questions with your pastor or trusted friends, invite others to share their stories with you and share yours with them.



Matthew 24:37-44

³⁷For as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.

³⁸In [those] days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day that Noah entered the ark.

³⁹They did not know until the flood came and carried them all away. So will it be [also] at the coming of the Son of Man.

⁴⁰Two men will be out in the field; one will be taken, and one will be left.

⁴¹Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken, and one will be left.

⁴²Therefore, stay awake! For you do not know on which day your Lord will come.

⁴³Be sure of this: if the master of the house had known the hour of night when the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and not let his house be broken into.

⁴⁴So too, you also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come.

Matthew 3:1-12

¹In those days John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the desert of Judea

²[and] saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"

³It was of him that the prophet Isaiah had spoken when he said:

"A voice of one crying out in the desert,

'Prepare the way of the Lord,

make straight his paths."

⁴John wore clothing made of camel's hair and had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey.

⁵At that time Jerusalem, all Judea, and the whole region around the Jordan were going out to him

⁶and were being baptized by him in the Jordan River as they acknowledged their sins.

⁷When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?"

⁸Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance.

⁹And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you, God can raise up children to Abraham from these stones.

¹⁰Even now the ax lies at the root of the trees. Therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹I am baptizing you with water, for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is mightier than I. I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the holy Spirit and fire.

¹²His winnowing fan is in his hand. He will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

Matthew 11:2-11

² When John heard in prison of the works of the Messiah, he sent his disciples to him

³ with this question, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?"

⁴ Jesus said to them in reply, "Go and tell John what you hear and see:

⁵ the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them.

⁶ And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me."

Jesus' Testimony to John.

⁷ As they were going off, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John, "What did you go out to the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind?

⁸ Then what did you go out to see? Someone dressed in fine clothing? Those who wear fine clothing are in royal palaces.

⁹ Then why did you go out? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.

¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written:

'Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you;

he will prepare your way before you.'

¹¹ Amen, I say to you, among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

Matthew 1:18-25

¹⁸ Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the holy Spirit.

¹⁹ Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly.

²⁰ Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her.

²¹ She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet:

²³ "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son,

and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means "God is with us."

²⁴ When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home.

²⁵ He had no relations with her until she bore a son, and he named him Jesus.

Day 1: We gather.

The first thing we do when we come to Mass is make the conscious decision to attend. The act of gathering means to bring together something that was apart. We come to the same place, at the same time, on the same day, for the same reason. As the celebrant greets us as brothers and sisters, together we make the Sign of the Cross. Our voices unite as we say, "Amen." This simple act of gathering in all our uniqueness and diversity at the same time celebrates our oneness and the universality of our Catholic faith.

FOR REFLECTION:

- Note the use of "we" and "us" and "our" throughout the Mass. Where do you hear these words? How are they used?
- Think of a time you have experienced a sense of community or belonging. How can you bring that feeling with you to Mass? And when you leave the church, how might you share in communion with others in your daily life?
- In this week's readings, what aspects of community do you find? How might this revelation deepen your relationship with Jesus and with others this Advent?

Advent week one

Nov. 27: words, phrases, thoughts: _____

Advent week two

Dec. 4: words, phrases, thoughts: _____

Advent week three

Dec. 11: words, phrases, thoughts: _____

Advent week four

Dec. 18: words, phrases, thoughts: _____



PRAYER:

Come Holy Spirit! Open my heart to hear the whisper of Your voice.

Thank you, Jesus, for my parish community. It is a safe haven where I can encounter You in the chaotic world around me. Thank you for giving me a place where I truly belong.

Help me to open my heart to those that may not look or act like me. Help me to show them unconditional love – the way that you love me.

Set my heart on fire, burning out of love for You, Jesus, present in the Eucharist.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 2: We forgive and ask forgiveness.

One of the first things we do at Mass once we are gathered is to acknowledge our sins. Generally, the celebrant will invite the assembly to call to mind our offenses. A really beautiful part of this penitential act is that we not only confess them to God in our hearts but to "you, my brothers and sisters." We all together recognize the hurts we have caused, and we ask for help from God, Mary, the angels and saints – and each other! Together we pray for mercy not only for ourselves but for our neighbors.

FOR REFLECTION:

- Brainstorm some words of healing that you hear in other parts of the liturgy.
- Where might you need forgiveness this Advent? Who might you need to forgive? What is one step you can take this week to reconcile? Take this with you to prayer this week and think intentionally about it the next time you attend Mass.

Advent week one

Nov. 28: words, phrases, thoughts: _____

Advent week two

Dec. 5: words, phrases, thoughts: _____

Advent week three

Dec. 12: words, phrases, thoughts: _____

Advent week four

Dec. 19: words, phrases, thoughts: _____

PRAYER:

Come Holy Spirit! Open my heart to hear the whisper
of Your voice.

Thank You Jesus for Your Divine Mercy. You call me to repentance
so that I can be made new.

I praise You for Your faithfulness!

Help me to show mercy to others as freely as you have shown mercy to me.
Soften my heart to forgive those who may have hurt me
and teach me how to forgive myself as well.

Set my heart on fire, burning out of love for You, Jesus,
present in the Eucharist.

In Jesus' name, Amen.



Day 3: We listen and respond.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." – John 1:1

As we continue to the Liturgy of the Word, we listen to sacred Scripture read aloud. This might feel like a point we are not actively participating in the liturgy, just sitting and listening. However, there is more to it. Each reading gives us a chance to reflect on God's living word. We may feel several things while listening to these readings: moved, inspired, changed, curious, challenged, and maybe even a little confused. Take time to sit with these feelings. These Scriptures were written down some 2,000 years ago and still hold so much meaning in today's world since they are God's own eternal words.

FOR REFLECTION:

- Choose to read this week's Gospel or today's Scripture readings. What word or phrase do you hear that sticks with you? What do you feel called to reflect upon more deeply or act on because of these words?
- Where do you see the Word of God coming alive in the world? For what or whom would you like to pray for today?

Advent week one

Nov. 29: words, phrases, thoughts: _____

Advent week two

Dec. 6: words, phrases, thoughts: _____

Advent week three

Dec. 13: words, phrases, thoughts: _____

Advent week four

Dec. 20: words, phrases, thoughts: _____



PRAYER:

Come Holy Spirit! Open my heart to hear the whisper
of Your voice.

Thank you, Jesus, for Your Living Word. The Scriptures
are your letter of love to my weary soul.

Help me to come to You in the Word more often.
Open my heart to recognize Your voice speaking to me
through Sacred Scripture.

Set my heart on fire, burning out of love for You, Jesus,
present in the Eucharist.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 4: We offer ourselves as Jesus offered himself.

As we begin the Liturgy of the Eucharist, the priest says, "Pray, brothers and sisters, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God...". This is another call for our active participation in the liturgy. Mass is not solely the prayers of the priest but of us, the gathered people of God and Body of Christ, to unite our prayers and sacrifices with our Lord.

Whether we make a sacrifice of our time, gifts or simply letting someone go ahead of us in line at the checkout, we are called to be aware that *"the lives of the faithful, their praise, sufferings, prayer and work are united with those of Christ and with his total offering"* (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1368). When we bring all these with us to Mass, we can be united to the sacrifice of Christ present in the Mass. We offer ourselves wholly, just as Jesus offered us himself and continues to do so when we celebrate the Mass together.

FOR REFLECTION:

- Consider what sacrifices you have made this week. Where have you offered yourself in service to others? What might you have given up for someone else? Who has made sacrifices for you?
- Next time you attend Mass, be intentional when you pray those words of sacrifice. Pray also for the neighbor next to you who is also bringing his or her whole self to the table.

Advent week one

Nov. 30: words, phrases, thoughts: _____

Advent week two

Dec. 7: words, phrases, thoughts: _____

Advent week three

Dec. 14: words, phrases, thoughts: _____

Advent week four

Dec. 21: words, phrases, thoughts: _____



PRAYER:

Come Holy Spirit! Open my heart to hear the whisper of Your voice.

Thank you, Jesus, for offering yourself to the Heavenly Father to pay the ultimate price for my sins. I could never thank you enough for that sacrifice of love but hope to spend eternity trying.

Help me to die to myself by offering frequent sacrifices that I can unite with Yours.

Set my heart on fire, burning out of love for You, Jesus, present in the Eucharist.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 5: We live in Mystery.

For the liturgy, "through which the work of our redemption is accomplished," in the divine sacrifice of the Eucharist, is the outstanding means whereby the faithful may express in their lives, and manifest to others, the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the true Church. – Sacrosanctum Concilium, (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy), 2

Each time we receive Eucharist, we affirm our belief of the Real Presence of Christ by responding "Amen" as we receive the host and drink from the chalice. In Advent, we reflect on yet another mystery, of God coming to us in the Word made flesh. In a world where we can Google answers in an instant to find anything we need (or don't need!) to know, living into this mystery can be challenging and uncomfortable. The Eucharist invites us to move deeper into that mystery, to know and love God more fully, all while knowing we will never really understand all. We are also invited to take the mystery out into the world, sharing God and God's love in our everyday lives.

FOR REFLECTION:

- What questions do you have about your faith or the Eucharist this week you wish to explore? Who might you discuss this with?
- Make a list of things that encourage your sense of wonder.

Advent week one

Dec. 1: words, phrases, thoughts: _____

Advent week two

Dec. 8: words, phrases, thoughts: _____

Advent week three

Dec. 15: words, phrases, thoughts: _____

Advent week four

Dec. 22: words, phrases, thoughts: _____



PRAYER:

Come Holy Spirit! Open my heart to hear the whisper of Your voice.

Thank you, Jesus, for the mystery of your Incarnation. You came to us as a baby living in poverty, so that nobody would feel threatened or afraid of You. But we know that you are the same God who created the universe! What a mystery.

Help me to run to You with arms open wide. You love me unconditionally; teach me how to love.

Set my heart on fire, burning out of love for You, Jesus, present in the Eucharist.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 6: We give thanks and praise.

The word "Eucharist" literally means "thanksgiving." The Mass, with all its moving parts, joins our sacrifices along with those of all of humanity and brings them to the mystery of the death and resurrection of Jesus. Through him, we enter into the most intimate relationship with our Creator. Just as when we receive material gifts from loved ones, we show our joy and love by offering thanks and praise, so too, we do this most perfectly in the Mass.

Near the beginning of Mass (except during Advent and Lent), we hear many words of thanks and praise in the Gloria, said or sung after the Kyrie (Lord, have mercy). During the Liturgy of the Word, we all reply in one voice, "Thanks be to God," "Glory to you, O Lord," and "Praise to you, Lord Jesus

Christ." In the Eucharistic Prayer, we hear, "It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere, to give you thanks." These powerful words are a declaration of our faith just as much as they are an aspiration to strive to let our choices and behavior be reflected in lives lived in gratitude for all that we have been given. Just as Jesus broke bread with the disciples, he invites us to take part in this holy sacrificial meal and to go forth to bless and nourish others.

FOR REFLECTION:

- Think of at least three things you are grateful for today.
- Where else in the liturgy do you hear words of thanks and praise?
- Who might you need to show gratitude toward? What is one way you can show gratitude this week?
- For whom are you most grateful? Offer a prayer for them.

Advent week one

Dec. 2: words, phrases, thoughts: _____

Advent week two

Dec. 9: words, phrases, thoughts: _____

Advent week three

Dec. 16: words, phrases, thoughts: _____

Advent week four

Dec. 23: words, phrases, thoughts: _____



PRAYER:

Come Holy Spirit! Open my heart to hear the whisper
of Your voice.

Thank you, Jesus, for the many gifts that we have been given.
Everything that we have is from You.

Help me to come to the Eucharist often, to thank you
in the most powerful way, for my many blessings.

Set my heart on fire, burning out of love for You, Jesus,
present in the Eucharist.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 7: We are sent.

At the end of Mass, we hear the priest or deacon proclaim the dismissal. Among the options, we are commissioned to "Go in peace, glorifying the Lord with your life." This dismissal is an invitation to take all that we have received in Mass, through the Word and through Eucharist and live it out in the world. We are not meant to save our faith for Sundays, or even our daily prayer routines. We are transformed each week through every part of the liturgy, through the Word and through the Eucharist. Our faith is to be infused in every aspect of our lives, spreading the Gospel and God's love through the world.

FOR REFLECTION:

- Emmanuel means "God with us." How do you see God and Jesus received in the Eucharist dwelling with you in your everyday life?
- How do you feel transformed after this week of reflection?
- Where are you called to live out God's love today?

Advent week one

Dec. 3: words, phrases, thoughts: _____

Advent week two

Dec. 10: words, phrases, thoughts: _____

Advent week three

Dec. 17: words, phrases, thoughts: _____

Advent week four

Dec. 24: words, phrases, thoughts: _____



PRAYER:

Come Holy Spirit! Open my heart to hear the whisper of Your voice.

Thank you, Jesus, for entrusting me with the responsibility to spread the Gospel.

I want to be a light to the world around me, to draw others to Christ.

Help me to boldly live for You alone. Give me the strength to never grow weary of this great commission.

Set my heart on fire, burning out of love for You, Jesus, present in the Eucharist.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

JOURNALING PAGE

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CONCLUSION:

As Advent concludes, may we ask ourselves how our way of worship transfigures every aspect of our lives. As Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI reminds us, "There is nothing authentically human – our thoughts and affections, our words and deeds – that does not find in the sacrament of the Eucharist the form it needs to be lived to the full. ... The worship of God in our lives cannot be relegated to something private and individual, but tends by its nature to permeate every aspect of our existence." May this prayerful Advent reflection remind us that God dwells within us and help us to embrace that we must become what we receive.



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Eucharistic Revival

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