

Waiting with Purpose



Advent.

Once a year the chance
to wait with purpose.

Makes a change.

– Carolyn Morris

PARTICIPANT VERSION 2021



In our waiting ...

God, we come to you in our waiting.

We wait with our fears,
our anxieties and frustrations,
our pains and regrets,
our shame and confusion.
God, help us to wait in peace.

We wait with impatience:
We rush around, preparing for festivities,
not leaving space to prepare our hearts.
God, help us to wait in faith.

We wait in excitement:
We are ready to celebrate!
We know the story
with its humbleness, simplicity and wonder.
God, help us to wait in joy.

We wait in thanksgiving:
We are free and able to celebrate.
We have others around us to share in the journey.
We are able to wonder at the marvel of your gift.
God, help us to receive your love.

– Katrina Crosby



Introduction

Advent. Once a year, the chance to wait with purpose.

The last two years have been like no other. The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on the global community with unavoidable immediacy, it has dramatically altered everyone's daily life. For many, life has not slowed down, some are working longer and harder and others have not been able to work at all. The pain and suffering that has been felt across the human race has called us to pray and reflect in these uncertain times of waiting.

The Plenary Council, much like our Diocesan Synod, has needed to change and adapt so we can continue the journey of listening, discerning and contemplating. We are thankful that technology has allowed these gatherings to continue. Our conversations during these times have been abundant, fruitful, and have provided the opportunity to share our stories and our insights.

As we continue our synodal journey through Advent we invite you to a period of waiting through connecting with each other in prayer and reflection. Unlike the uncertainty that so many have experienced over the last two years, we know as Christians that our waiting in anticipation for the birth of Christ has purpose.

Over four weeks this resource provides the opportunity for us to encounter the mystery of Christ present in the Advent Gospels and our rich Catholic tradition. We are invited to encounter, recall, reflect, share, connect and consider how we will live differently as a result of what we have experienced.

By being together with our stories, our questions, our open hearts, and minds, we can form a community that lifts, honours, and learns from each other.

Let us wait with purpose this Advent so we can continue to build the Kingdom of God together.

Rose McAllister

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The Process of Mystagogical Reflection

Please refer to the accompanying document which introduces Mystagogical Reflection and explains the process.

Invitation

The person guiding the group invites people into the process based on the following invitation.

Listen to God say to you ... *Be still and know that I am God* (Ps 46:10)

Moved by the Holy Spirit in response we pray ...

Open my/our ears to the Word of God ...

Open my/our heart(s) to the love of God ...

Open my/our mind(s) to the wisdom of God ...

Let us listen for the words of everlasting life ...

Mystagogical Reflection (Sunday Gospel)

Each step finishes in silence before the guide invites the group into the next step ...

1. Encounter with Christ in the Word proclaimed ... listen ...

2. Recollection: What happened?

*An Invitation to recall what happened in the text. No interpretation, just what happened.
The detail is important.*

3. Reflection: What did you notice – what word or phrase captures your attention?

What did you experience/feel? How does this relate to your life experience?

What meaning is God revealing to you?

An invitation to be attentive to Christ present in the encounter.

4. Faith sharing: How is the meaning found in your encounter with Christ in the scripture connecting with the season of Advent? How are we being invited to know Christ more deeply and live more faithfully?

An invitation to connect your experience and the meaning you have found in it, with what Christ is revealing in the living tradition of our Catholic faith.

5. Connection: Why does what Christ has revealed to us matter now?

An invitation to consider what it means to live from Christ.

6. Conversion: How will you live differently as a result of what you have experienced?

What is dying? What is being raised up?

Contemplate – rest in the presence of God.



”

Contemplation is not a technique to be mastered
but a journey inside ourselves
to become one with what already is.”

– *Daniel O’Leary*

Pattern for Gathering

Whether gathering online or physically, each gathering will follow the following pattern:

1. Gathering

Draw people together, ensuring everyone is introduced by name as necessary and that they have a copy of the participant resource with the reading and the Mystagogical Reflection process.

Identify someone who will proclaim the reading.

2. Invitation (p. 4)

3. Proclamation of the reading (See relevant page)


4. Mystagogical Reflection finishing in silent contemplation (p. 5)

5. Final Prayer/Blessing (See relevant page)

A prayer and blessing are provided for each week. You may like to use something else or pray in response to the moment.

6. Thank you

And a reminder of the arrangements for the next gathering.

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a light pink top and dark shorts, is sitting on dark, jagged rocks by the ocean. She is looking out at the sea towards a sunset. The sky is filled with soft, colorful clouds in shades of blue, orange, and pink. The water is calm, reflecting the light from the sky. A semi-transparent white box with blue text is overlaid on the center of the image.

***God waits silently
in our inner recesses,
the chambers of our soul,
gazing lovingly
on our treasure,
awaiting our response.***

– Yvonne Morland



Advent Gospels



First Sunday of Advent (28 November)

Gathering

Invitation (p. 4)

Gospel (Lk 21:25-28, 34-36)

Proclaimed without the liturgical dialogue that usually introduces and concludes it.

Jesus said to his disciples: 'There will be signs in the sun and moon and stars; on earth nations in agony, bewildered by the clamour of the ocean and its waves; men dying of fear as they await what menaces the world, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand erect, hold your heads high, because your liberation is near at hand.'

'Watch yourselves, or your hearts will be coarsened with debauchery and drunkenness and the cares of life, and that day will be sprung on you suddenly, like a trap. For it will come down on every living man on the face of the earth. Stay awake, praying at all times for the strength to survive all that is going to happen, and to stand with confidence before the Son of Man.'

Final Prayer

Let us pray ...

God our saviour,
you utter a word of promise and hope
and hasten the day of justice and freedom,
yet we live in a world forgetful of your word,
our watchfulness dulled by the cares of life.

Keep us alert.
make us attentive to your word,
ready to look on your Son
when he comes with power and great glory.

Make us holy and blameless,
ready to stand secure
when the day of his coming shakes the world
with terror.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Blessing

Hand in hand with God,
we will walk in light and justice.

Hand in hand with God,
we will be a light for others.

Hand in hand with God,
we will speak and live in love.

Come Lord Jesus.



Second Sunday of Advent (5 December)

Gathering

Invitation (p. 4)

Gospel (Lk 3:1-6)

Proclaimed without the liturgical dialogue that usually introduces and concludes it.

In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar's reign, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of the lands of Iturea and Trachonitis, Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. He went through the whole Jordan district proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the sayings of the prophet Isaiah:

A voice cries in the wilderness;
Prepare a way for the Lord,
make his paths straight.
Every valley will be filled in,
every mountain and hill be laid low,
winding ways will be straightened
and rough roads made smooth.
And all mankind shall see the salvation of God.

Final Prayer

Let us pray ...

God of our salvation,
you straighten the winding ways of our hearts
and smooth the paths made rough by sin.

Make our conduct blameless
keep our hearts watchful in holiness
and bring to perfection the good you have
begun in us.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Blessing

Hand in hand with God,
we will walk in light and justice.

Hand in hand with God,
we will be a light for others.

Hand in hand with God,
we will speak and live in love.

Come Lord Jesus.



Third Sunday of Advent (12 December)

Gathering

Invitation (p. 4)

Gospel (Lk 3:10-18)

Proclaimed without the liturgical dialogue that usually introduces and concludes it.

When all the people asked John, 'What must we do?' he answered, 'If anyone has two tunics he must share with the man who has none, and the one with something to eat must do the same.' There were tax collectors too who came for baptism, and these said to him, 'Master, what must we do?' He said to them, 'Exact no more than your rate.' Some soldiers asked him in their turn, 'What about us? What must we do?' He said to them, 'No intimidation! No extortion! Be content with your pay!'

A feeling of expectancy had grown among the people, who were beginning to think that John might be the Christ, so John declared before them all, 'I baptise you with water, but someone is coming, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fan is in his hand to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his barn; but the chaff he will burn in a fire that will never go out.' As well as this, there were many other things he said to exhort the people and to announce the Good News to them.

Final Prayer

Let us pray ...

Almighty God,
you sent your Son into a world
where the wheat must be winnowed from the chaff
and evil clings even to what is good.

Let the fire of your Spirit
purge us of greed and deceit,
so that, purified, we may find our peace in you
and you may delight in us.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Blessing

Hand in hand with God,
we will walk in light and justice.

Hand in hand with God,
we will be a light for others.

Hand in hand with God,
we will speak and live in love.

Come Lord Jesus.



Fourth Sunday of Advent (19 December)

Gathering

Invitation (p. 4)

Gospel (Lk 1:39-45)

Proclaimed without the liturgical dialogue that usually introduces and concludes it.

Mary set out and went as quickly as she could to a town in the hill country of Judah. She went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. Now as soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. She gave a loud cry and said, 'Of all women you are the most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord? For the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leapt for joy. Yes, blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled.'

Final Prayer

Let us pray ...

Who are we, Lord God,
that you should come to us?
Yet you have visited your people
and redeemed us in your Son.

As we prepare to celebrate his birth,
make our hearts leap for joy at the sound of your Word,
and move us by your Spirit to bless your wonderful works.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Blessing

Hand in hand with God,
we will walk in light and justice.

Hand in hand with God,
we will be a light for others.

Hand in hand with God,
we will speak and live in love.

Come Lord Jesus.



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