

- **Readings of the Day**

- Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11
- Psalm 85
- 2 Peter 3:8-14
- Mark 1:1-8

Prepare

- **Reflection**

Quick! Grandma's coming! Clean! Last minute cleaning before guests arrive can be very stressful. Holiday cleaning feels a bit different. We put away regular clutter to make room for Christmas clutter-I mean, decorations. We don't scramble to "fake clean" (like when you throw anything and everything in a closet, hoping nobody will open it). Instead, we prepare our homes to take on a different feel, a celebration. We decorate in ways that are meaningful to how we view Christmas. We seek to set a mood. We also want the house to feel welcoming to others. We want to bring them into our sense of Christmas.

Did you realize that these days before Christmas are also the perfect time to prepare your heart? In Advent, we think about what it is like for people in the Bible to wait for the Messiah for so many years. Like John the Baptist, we search ourselves for an attitude of repentance-turning away from our selfish, sinful nature in order to be ready for the Baby Jesus. This is the time to prepare our hearts and our homes for the Saviour.

- **Prayer**

Holy Spirit, help us get our hearts ready for Christmas. There is something inside each of us that needs to be cleaned up. Hear us as we pray to you to clean those things from our hearts. In Jesus name we pray. AMEN



Monday December 11, 2023

Monday Second Week of Advent

- **Readings of the Day**

- Isaiah 35.1-10
- Psalm 85
- Luke 5.17-26

- **Reflection**

What cripples the mind and heart and stifles the healing power of love? Sin and unforgiveness for certain! Sin cripples us more than any physical ailment can. Sin is the work of the kingdom of darkness, and it holds us in eternal bondage. There is only one solution and that is the healing, cleansing power of Jesus' forgiveness. Jesus' treatment of sinners upset the religious teachers of the day. When the cripple was brought to Jesus because of the faith of his friends, Jesus did the unthinkable. He first forgave the man his sins. The scribes regarded this as blasphemy because they understood that only God had authority to forgive sins and to unbind a man or woman from their burden of guilt. Jesus claimed an authority which only God could rightfully give. Jesus not only proved that his authority came from God, he showed the great power of God's redeeming love and mercy by healing the cripple of his physical ailment. This man had been crippled not only physically, but spiritually as well. Jesus freed him from his burden of guilt and restored his body as well. The Lord is ever ready to bring us healing of body, mind, and soul. His grace brings us freedom from the power of sin and from bondage to harmful desires and addictions. Do you allow anything to keep you from Jesus' healing power?

<https://dailyscripture.servantsoftheword.org/readings/luke517.htm>

- **Prayer**

Lord Jesus, through your merciful love and forgiveness you bring healing and restoration to my body, soul, and mind. May your healing power and love touch every area of my life -- my innermost thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and memories. Pardon my offences and transforme me in the power of your Holy Spirit that I may walk confidently in your truth and righteousness.

AMEN



Tuesday December 12, 2023

Tuesday, Third Week of Advent

- **Readings of the Day**
 - Zachariah 2.10-13
 - Responsorial Canticle Judith 13
 - Luke 1.39-47

- **Reflection**

Feliz dia de la Virgen de Guadalupe! Happy Day of Our Lady of Guadalupe!

Today our church – especially our brothers and sisters in Mexico, the native peoples of Latin America, many of our Hispanic brothers and sisters throughout our country, and *so many others* – celebrate our Blessed Mother Mary as Patroness of the Americas under this beautiful title and beautiful image.

The image is said to have appeared miraculously on the cloak of Blessed Juan Diego in 1531 as proof to his doubting bishop that the Blessed Mother had appeared to him over the course of several days. The Blessed Mother instructed Juan to go to the top of Tepeyac Hill to collect roses at the time of year when the hill was barren – the miraculous “Roses of December” as they are called.

Bringing the roses to the bishop in his cloak, the image appeared when he lowered his cloak before the bishop. The image is now venerated by hundreds of thousands as it hangs in the Shrine to Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico.

The presence of the Blessed Mother to Juan Diego echoes her presence in the Scripture readings for today, which remind us of Mary’s role as “first disciple,” always bringing to the Church the Good News of her Son. <https://churchmd.com/news-blog/reflections-on-the-word-feast-of-our-lady-of-guadalupe-december-12-2020/>

- **Prayer**

Grant peace, justice, and prosperity to our peoples; for we entrust to your care all that we have and all that we are, our Lady and Mother. We wish to be entirely yours and to walk with you along the way of complete faithfulness to Jesus Christ in His Church; hold us always with your loving hand. AMEN



Wednesday December 13, 2023

Wednesday Second Week of Advent

- **Readings of the Day**

- Isaiah 40.25-31
- Psalm 103
- Matthew 11.28-30

- **Reflection**

Sometimes, we can find peace in the most surprising circumstances and the most unlikely ways. Peace can be as much a state of mind as a physical state of being. And ultimately, peace comes from God. When we share peace, we're sharing God.

As part of getting ready for Christmas, with the celebration of Jesus' coming, think of how you can grow closer to him. When you start looking carefully, you may be surprised at how many places you "see" Jesus in action all around you.

Sarah Reinhard

- **Prayer**

Jesus, I love you. Thank you for the peace you bring to the world. Amen



Thursday, December 14, 2021

Thursday of the Second Week of Advent

- **Readings of the Day**

- Isaiah 41:13-20
- Psalm 145
- Matthew 11:11-15

- **Reflection**



Isaiah 41:13 is a favorite bible verse. We can find so much comfort and safety in the words Jesus says. First off, this verse is full of visuals. Just imagine God reaching for your right hand, holding tight and telling you, "I will help you". We serve an all-powerful God and yet He wants to come alongside us and hold our hand. This verse gives us a glimpse into His heart and reiterates how He longs to have an intimate relationship with us.

Next, the verse tells us that He initiates an interaction between us, which means He wants to be near us and longs to comfort us. Lastly, and most importantly, He talks to us one on one. It is like He is whispering to us. In Him there is no fear, and we have help. WOW! Jesus, the same man that gave sight to the blind, wants to hold my hand, drive away my fears and help me through this life. We have needed His comfort tenfold throughout our wait. He loves us so much and wants to meet us where we are. <https://livinginthewait.com/2018/02/08/isaiah-4113/>

- **Prayer**

O Lord, my God you are my refuge and my strength. You are my ever-present help in times of trouble. When it seems like my world is crumbling around me and I am thrown around by the storms of my life, take away my fear. When I am weak, you are my strength. When I am vulnerable, you are my refuge. When I cry for help, you will answer. Remind me Lord that you are always with me, you will never leave or forsake me. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. AMEN.

Friday, December 15, 2023

Friday of the Second Week of Advent

- **Readings of the Day**
 - Isaiah 48:17-19
 - Psalm 1
 - Matthew 11:16-19



- **Reflection**

We want to put God in a box. That makes it simpler: we know what to expect, how to act, and how to proceed. However, in today's Gospel, Jesus reminds of that God breaks out of every box, defies every expectation. John was sent, and people found him wanting. The Messiah was sent, and his actions or companions did not impress the people. During Advent, we prepare for one of the most surprising actions of God, the incarnation. It's a good time to consider what boundaries we've placed on God and be amazed by the way God breaks them.

– daily prayer liturgy training publication

- **Prayer**

Almighty God, you constantly surprise us. Open our hearts this Advent season to see you in the unexpected and be delighted by your presence. Through Christ, our Lord. AMEN

Saturday, December 16, 2023

Saturday of the Second Week of Advent

- **Readings of the Day**
 - Sirach 48:1-4, 9-11
 - Psalm 80
 - Matthew 17:10-13



- **Reflection**

Today's Gospel immediately follows the story of the Transfiguration. Peter, James, and John had gone up the mountain to be with Jesus. As they set aside the events that had been swirling around them, they were able to witness him, in his heavenly glory. This revelation helped shape their thoughts about who Jesus was and why he had come. As a result, they came down from the mountain better prepared to journey with him to Jerusalem and his cross.

Every day, Jesus invites you to come "up to the mountain" with him in prayer. He knows that like Peter, James and John, your heart can be changed as you spend more time with him.

-The Word Among Us The Spirit of Catholic Living

- **Prayer**

Jesus, thank you for giving me a glimpse of your glory today! Through Christ, our Lord, AMEN.