

Advent Reflections 2011

'But Mary...pondered these things in her heart' Luke 2:19



Advent is a time of waiting. Although we know the coming Gift on Christmas, this part of the season is a pregnant, expectant time, a looking forward to the True Miracle from God.

During the weeks of Advent there will be an opportunity to reflect on a particular theme for the week. The theme of the week allows us to ponder, reflect, meditate, pray and 'wait' together as a community. These selections, out of many, are meant to draw us deeper into the Story of Advent.

Each Sunday there will be an insert in the bulletin, on the website, as well as in the Friday Journal, that will give you a guide for reflections for the week. On the reverse of this flyer are some suggestions on how to ponder the mysteries individually, as a family, and with your children.

On Friday night, the sanctuary will be open from 7-8pm for a time of sacred silence. This is a time out of the busy, sometimes noisy, season our culture has created. Use some, or all, of this silent time to pray, ponder the weekly theme, and simply 'BE' with the Lord as you need.

Weekly Themes for Reflection:

1. *Week of Nov 27: 'What do You Desire?'*
2. *Week of Dec 4: 'The Visitation'*
3. *Week of Dec 11: 'The Journey to Bethlehem'*
4. *Week of Dec 18: 'The Birth, Shepherds, and Angels'*
5. *Week of Dec 25: 'Simeon's Canticle'*
6. *Week of Jan 1: 'The Magi'*

THIS IS AN INVITATION TO EXPERIENCE THE
MYSTERY OF GOD DURING THE ADVENT SEASON!

Advent Reflections: Suggestions



There are many ways to ponder, reflect, meditate and pray the Scriptures. You are encouraged to use those ways that are familiar to you, as well as experiment with ways that are unfamiliar.

Some of us are visual, and enjoy pictures that help us to pray, i.e. icons, 'imagining' the story in our heads. Some of us are more auditory, and enjoy things such as music, listening to sermons, or even reading out loud ourselves. Others of us are more tactile, or touchy feely, meaning we like to draw, create art, get physical in our prayer stance. Most of us use multiple ways of experiencing God.

Once you receive your weekly theme and scripture, here are some ways to consider reflections:

- *Ask God to be with you as you ponder, reflect, pray, meditate*
- *Allow your imagination to enter the story portion: ask, who am I in this passage? What do I see/hear/smell/notice? What is my experience of God/Jesus in this part of the story?*
- *During your commute time, turn off the radio/cell phone and allow time to recall the passage, and talk to God about it.*
- *During work or school breaks, take an intentional 5-10 minutes to look up to the skies and think about the story, letting it sink in.*
- *During dinner time conversations, ask around the table what each person likes about the story, is experiencing in it.*
- *Young children may need the story told in a 'bedtime' story mode, with animations and wonder...and we adults need that too!*

AS YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE, SHARE YOUR
REFLECTIONS WITH OTHERS AROUND YOU