



Bringing Home the Word

Second Sunday of Advent (B)
December 6, 2020

Waiting Expectantly

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

Most of us are not good at waiting. We want things right away and would rather arrive just on time than stand around uselessly. Few things are as annoying as waiting in a doctor's office, a government office, or being stuck in traffic.

Yet waiting can also be an exciting and busy time, like a bride and groom preparing for their wedding. There is no time to waste, since the date is approaching and there is so much to do in order for everything to be prepared perfectly. Advent waiting should be more like this expectant waiting.

John the Baptist was sent to point toward Christ and invite the people to their wedding with God. The divine spouse was coming back to his beloved and sent the groom ahead to let everyone know he was coming.

Thus, John preached preparation, conversion, and setting aside everything that would distract people from getting the heart ready for Jesus. Loving, active planning was as necessary for those who listened to John the Baptist as it is for us.

This means going up the mountain and into the desert. Set aside normal distractions and dedicate more time to think about Christ, preparing our hearts and minds for the big day of his arrival.

Advent isn't a nervous time of sitting around and hoping the line goes quickly. It is an active, engaged, and hopeful anticipation of one we eagerly await. +

Sunday Readings

Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11

Go up onto a high mountain,
Zion, herald of good news!

2 Peter 3:8-14

The Lord...is patient with you, not wishing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Mark 1:1-8

"Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; / he will prepare your way."

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A Word from Pope Francis

How beautiful it is to think of ourselves as proclaimers of the resurrection of Jesus, not only in words, but also in our conduct and testimony of life! Jesus does not want disciples who are merely able to repeat memorized formulas. He wants witnesses: people who spread hope with their way of welcoming, smiling, and loving.

—General Audience, October 4, 2017



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- What distractions am I setting aside to make this Advent special?
- How is this time of repentance, fasting, and almsgiving going?

Our Celestial Company

By Kathryn Gniadek

Although I was so little I cannot remember my exact age, I will never forget the picture in my bedroom of a fabulously huge-winged benevolent angel guarding a little boy and girl crossing a bridge. My mother told me this was a picture of my very own guardian angel, who watched over my brother and me as we played. I studied the details of the picture every night, and then I would gaze out my window into the starry sky and wonder if my angel would fly into my room for a visit. The Guardian Angel Prayer was in my heart and on my lips every night as a child:

*Angel of God, my guardian dear,
To whom God's love commits me here,
Ever this day be at my side,
To light and guard, rule and guide.*

People have seen angels in cloud formations and heard timely messages of love and support in a song, a television program, a sermon, or a conversation with a friend. When we consider angels in relation to our faith, it's crucial to understand that, as Catholics, we believe that angels are by nature all spirit and servants of the Most High on our behalf. Hebrews 1:14 says angels are "ministering spirits sent forth to serve for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation."

Beside each believer, from the moment of conception until death, the watchful care and intercession of our angel is present to us. In God's infinite



wisdom and goodness, he has lovingly provided for us as we journey home to him. There are so many temptations and lies supplied by the evil one to ensnare us and destroy our souls. Yet, as St. Thomas said in his *Summa Theologica*, "The angels work together for the benefit of us all" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 350).

Angels are messengers of peace, love, and the will of God as well as the guardians of our souls. In my own life, the presence of my guardian angel is amplified in moments of grave struggle. After my best friend died, I was praying in church, feeling quite distraught over the unexpected loss. As I looked down, I saw a shiny dime on the floor near my pew. Since that moment, when I have

needed angelic comfort the most, I have found dimes everywhere—in the lint trap of my dryer, in the sink drain after doing the dishes, and in the soles of my sneakers as I prepared to lace up for a workout. In that instant I was assured that, always, my angel was "at my side, to light and guard, rule and guide." Finding a dime prompts me to acknowledge and welcome the presence of my guardian angel. When I do so, I always feel closer to the love of God. In those moments, the peace-filled, loving spirit of my guardian angel feels closer to me than my own breath.

Invoke the loving care and concern of your angel, and you will know you are truly loved and never alone. Your angel will guide you to the loving arms of our Creator and Lord, he who is above all things. As we journey toward heaven, we have blessed company. Moreover, when we take our last breaths, our guardian angel will be there to guide us safely to our Father's house. +

PRAYER

Lord, you are the compassion of God in the world. You never forget any of your people. Give me the courage to be the compassion of God for others.

—From *Joyful Meditations for Every Day of Advent and the 12 Days of Christmas*,
Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

WEEKDAY READINGS

December 7–12

Monday, St. Ambrose:

Is 35:1–10 / Lk 5:17–26

Tuesday, Immaculate Conception of the

Blessed Virgin Mary: Gn 3:9–15, 20 /

Eph 1:3–6, 11–12 / Lk 1:26–38

Wednesday, Advent Weekday:

Is 40:25–31 / Mt 11:28–30

Thursday, Advent Weekday:

Is 41:13–20 / Mt 11:11–15

Friday, Advent Weekday:

Is 48:17–19 / Mt 11:16–19

Saturday, Our Lady of Guadalupe:

Zec 2:14–17 or Rv 11:19a; 12:1–6a, 10ab /

Lk 1:26–38 or 1:39–47

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