

Advent, 2025

Reflection

In the Gospel of today's Liturgy we hear a beautiful promise that introduces us to the Season of Advent:

"Your Lord is coming" (cf. Mt 24:42).

*This is the foundation of our hope. It is what supports us
even in the most difficult and painful moments of our life.*

God is coming, God is near and is coming. Let us never forget this! The Lord always comes...

Pope Francis, Angelus, November 27th, 2022

As we enter Advent this year and draw the Jubilee Year of Hope to a close, let us indeed remember that God is coming. God is already here. As bleak as things may seem, we are meant to be Pilgrims of Hope for ourselves and each other, *because* we believe God is coming and is already here.

We know Advent to be a time of waiting, preparation, and anticipation, all of which we live in a spirit of hope. To do this well, we must open ourselves for God's arrival. We must empty ourselves to make room for God to come in. We must quiet ourselves to hear God approaching, and we must be vigilant to recognize when God actually does appear.

This may mean letting go of some of the other preparations that often consume our Advents. It may mean transforming other preparations into prayer, inviting God into the gift buying and wrapping, the decorating and baking, the card writing and phone calling.



The important thing is that we never forget not just the real meaning of Christmas, but the real meaning of Advent, a season pregnant with Hope and soon to be bursting forth in the rebirth of the Prince of Hope, Jesus our Emmanuel, God with us.

Prayer by Carol Penner, Dir. of Theological Studies, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, ON

God, you see us here in the northern hemisphere.
The days get shorter and the arc of the sun
creeps towards the horizon.

Winter has come
with its great swaths of darkness.

Hope hunkers down with us
as the cold north winds make us shiver.

The last geese fly across the sky heading south,
and the trees are suddenly bare.

In this emptiness you give us advent.
We reach into dark corners and pull out dusty boxes.

Hope glimmers as we string up colorful lights,
and set up nativity scenes that bring to mind
the gift of a baby in Bethlehem.

Hope is hard to find in that war-torn place of your birth,
and in so many places this year.

Bombs and bullets crater communities,
and violence begets violence.

So many bodies, so much blood.

Will it ever stop?

Hope is buried in rubble this year
and we dig it out with our bare hands.

Into this unsteady world, a baby is born
Hope slides into our lives
with incredibly tiny hands and feet
and a promise that you are with us.
You melt our frozen hearts
so we can answer your call to generosity.
There is so much suffering
and we have so much to share.
Your hope hovers over the world
an ever-present help in times of trouble.
...Help us reach out
to one person who is hopeless,
who is grieving or sick or new to this country,
offering companionship and comfort.
In our busy lives we can find time.
Thank you that sometimes hope falls on us like snow
transforming the world overnight.
As we do your work, we see the essential outlines,
the breathtaking beauty of the world around us.
Let your hope fall on every war-torn country,
so that ceasefires can hold,
and healing can begin.
This is our first advent prayer,
a prayer of thanks for the gift of hope:
a gift we need and treasure in times like these.
Amen.

Suggested Actions

- ❖ Reserve some time for quiet to listen for God and receive God's guidance, mercy, love, or whatever else you require.
- ❖ Center God in all your Advent preparations. See God in the small things, as well as the big.
- ❖ Pray the prayer above which offers several action suggestions: to appreciate the beauty of nature, to reach out to others who are in need of comfort or companionship, to help build peace in places of violence, and to express thanks for this sacred time when hope reigns.
- ❖ Be sure to open this [link](#) to our anti-war toy flier that contains a beautiful poem by a teenager from Democratic Republic of the Congo about her dreams for a better world, one shared by children around the world, and for suggestions for creative, constructive, nonviolent, and healthful gifts for the children in your lives.
- ❖ Check out the Upcoming Events page at this website for more things you can do, and also visit these other Pax Christi websites for more ways to pray, study, and act: www.paxchristiusa.org and www.nypaxchristi.org.
- ❖ Share this reflection with others.