

# Advent Prayer Week Four



## The Preparation

### Loreto Prayer for Advent Week 4 | The Preparation

*The 2021 Loreto Justice Network's Advent prayers attempt to link the Sunday readings, the symbolic richness of the Advent wreath and the Province's justice priorities. Today we pray with the promise and potential experienced by Mary as she awaits the birth of her son, Jesus.*

#### Gathering Acclamations

We gather on the land of the (Wurundjeri) people,  
listening to all creation with hearts and souls,  
imaginations and intelligence.

We gather during this summery Advent season,  
lengthening days to linger in love,  
savouring time to pause, ponder and pray,

We gather as friends of Jesus, Mary Ward and Teresa Ball,  
opening our bodies to the beauty and brokenness of our world,  
and to one another, our circle of friends.

We gather as one Institute, many parts of one body,  
desiring freedom, justice and integrity,  
fostering felicity across these days of endings and festivity.

# Lighting of the Advent Wreath

*As the four candles are lit ...*

O God of infinite mystery,  
your presence fills us with anticipation and hope  
May these candles remind us of the thrill of new life in our midst  
and open our hearts to the possibility of this season.

## Scripture

Use all or part of Sunday's Liturgy of the Word:

*Micah 5:1-4a*

*Psalms 80*

*Hebrews 5:5-10*

*Luke 1:39-45*

Suggested Reading          Sunday's Gospel from Luke

Mary set out  
and travelled to the hill country in haste  
to a town of Judah,  
where she entered the house of Zechariah  
and greeted Elizabeth.  
When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting,  
the infant leaped in her womb,  
and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit,  
cried out in a loud voice and said,  
"Blessed are you among women,  
and blessed is the fruit of your womb.  
And how does this happen to me,  
that the mother of my Lord should come to me?  
For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears,  
the infant in my womb leaped for joy.  
Blessed are you who believed  
that what was spoken to you by the Lord  
would be fulfilled."



# Visual Meditation

[View Susan Daily's visual meditation](#) exploring the power of the symbol of Mary's preparation for the birth of her son.

Here is the text used in the visual meditation for further pondering:

## The Preparation

Awaiting birth is thrilling and nerve-wracking!

Our wreath is almost complete!

We join Mary in anticipation and hope.

As we move into the final week of Advent, we thrill to each beat of life, asking  
for openness to all possibility.

Our bodies echo with hope, across a long journey to a cold feedbox.

Birth of vulnerability and smallness.

Birth in simple setting, cold and stark, yet warmed by love.

God with and within us.

*What do we truly await?*

*Are we truly prepared?*

*How have we truly readied our bodies, now swelling in anticipation?*

*Of what are we afraid as birth approaches?*

Our desire is to give birth to a new world:

a world where all are welcome,

a world where infants survive and thrive,

a world where parents share the load,

a world where all live in harmony and hope.

Births bring forth love!

Come Lord Jesus!

*... the infant in my womb leaped for joy ...*

*Advent 4*

*Gospel of Luke*



## Space

A period of silence and/or an opportunity to pray or share an insight.

## Prayers of the People

*(based on the Province's justice priorities)*

For our church, that we might reclaim the freshness and promise of the Gospel.

Let us pray to the Lord:            All: Gracious God, hear our prayer.

For our indigenous sisters and brothers,

that respect, reconciliation and reparation be poured out by our nation.

May our network accept the invitation from Aunty Sherry Balcombe to move from awareness-raising to action.

Let us pray to the Lord:            All: Gracious God, hear our prayer.

For a deepening of our commitment to our global anti-trafficking stance.

May our Christmas giving be marked by conscious choices that respect the rights of our earth, children and those trafficked for labour.

Let us pray to the Lord:            All: Gracious God, hear our prayer.

For our MWIA partners as they 'create just and sustainable change with women, children and communities.' This week we pray with our friends in Wilcannia Forbes.

Let us pray to the Lord:            All: Gracious God, hear our prayer.

For our entire cosmos, that the interconnection of all created things be honoured and celebrated.

Let us pray to the Lord:            All: Gracious God, hear our prayer.

*Other prayers may be offered ...*



# Blessing

*(Adapted from a text by Henri Nouwen)*

Lord Jesus,  
you are both the light and the darkness.

Send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas.  
We, who have so much to do, seek quiet spaces to hear your  
voice each day.

We, who are anxious over many things, look forward to your  
coming among us.

We, who are blessed in so many ways, long for the complete joy  
of your kingdom.

We, whose hearts are heavy, seek the joy of your presence.  
We, who feel the pain of injustice, long for harmony across  
all creation.

We are your people, walking in darkness, yet seeking the light.

To you we say,

Come Lord Jesus! ... Mai Nai Jesus ... Halika panginoong hesus ...

Lạy Chúa Giê-su, xin hãy đến!

Amen.