

# Mercy Associates Praying Advent

## Invitation to Prayer

You are invited to experience Advent not as just another time of hustle and bustle, but rather as a sacred season ... an oasis of opportunity... to relish the gift of 'time' ... and desire to reclaim hope and trust again in the promise that our Messiah comes...

To accept this invitation ... find a quiet space or come together with Mercy friends ... pause and become still.

To come into the quiet  
play some quiet instrumental music,  
or listen calmly to the sounds of life and creation all around you .....



*For your prayer come to quiet and then choose one of the scriptures on the back of this sheet to sit with it for a while in silence.*

*As you do this perhaps invite the person in the scripture that you have chosen to stay with you and to accompany you in this time of prayer. Ask them to take you into their experience, their faith and their life.*

*After some time note the questions for reflection that accompany the scripture and your response.*

*Then, share what you are noticing in your prayer in the group of your mercy friends, or by journaling.*

*To draw the prayer together read the Poem below as a prayer.*



Love is born,  
With a dark and troubled face  
When hope is dead  
And in the most unlikely place  
Love is born:  
Love is always born.

Michael Leunig

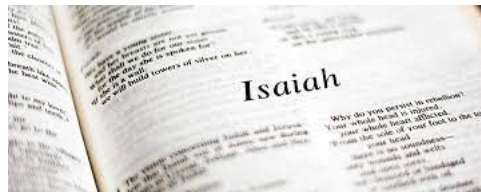
*'Advent invites us to consider again what it is about the spiritual life that is trying to be born in us again: a new desire for God, the hope in God's goodness, renewed awareness of God's presence around us...'* Joan Chittister

## ISAIAH

The Advent Prophet **waiting in trust**

ISAIAH was the prophet who did more than anyone to keep Israel trusting in God in hard times. He promised a coming Messiah-King who would bring in the Reign of God. In 734 BC, he challenged king Ahaz to put his trust in God, not in foreign alliances:

**“Stand firm in your faith,  
Or you will not stand at all.”** (Is 7:9)



### Reflect:

*Who do you know that is experiencing  
hard times?  
How do you stand firm in your faith?*

### Respond:

*How could you bring God's way to life  
where you are?*

## THE BAPTIST

The Advent Herald **waiting in hope**

JOHN the Baptizer announced the time when the hopes of Israel would be fulfilled. To people crushed by Roman occupation, when all seemed lost, he shouted:

**“Prepare a way for the Lord!  
Make a straight path for God.  
Fill up valleys, level hills ...  
Now you will see God's power to save.”**  
(Lk 3:4-6)



### Reflect:

*What blocks the way of the Lord for you?  
How do you make a way for the Lord?  
Where do you find hope?  
Who needs hope?*

### Respond:

*How could you keep hope alive where you are?*

## MARY

The bearer of the Messiah **surprised by joy**

MARY was a young peasant girl whose life was rocked by the message that she was called to bear the Messiah. Her response:

**“I am the Lord's servant.  
Let it happen as you said.”** (Lk 1:38)  
Carrying the child, she visited her cousin, who said:  
**“Blessed are you for believing  
That what God says, God does.”** (Lk 1:45)



### Reflect:

*Where have you been blessed by your believing?  
Have you been surprised by God?  
Where is the joy in your life?*

### Respond:

*How could you bring God's surprising joy to life  
where you are?*