

# *“Listening in the Light of Christ”*

## **Advent Prayer Service**

(Adapted from Catholic Education Week 2012 Prayer Resources)

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Good morning, and welcome to our prayer for this first week of Advent. The theme of our prayer this morning is, “Listening in the Light of Christ.” Advent reminds us that like Mary, we are called to listen with the ears of our hearts to the messages of God’s drawing near. We hear this message in God’s word, in the kindness of friends in the love of family and in the beauty of nature. How has God’s message of love come to you this past week?

Let us begin our prayer marked by the sign of our faith: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### **OPENING SONG:**

Please join in our opening song ...

Suggested --

*O Come, O Come Emmanuel* (CBW III #312)

*O Come, Divine Messiah* (CBW III #310)

*Listen, My People* (CBW III #309)

*Be Still* – David Kauffman

***Breath of Heaven* – Amy Grant**

### **OPENING PRAYER:**

Let us pray.

Loving God,

send Your Spirit of peace upon us

as we wait and listen to hear Your voice.

Give us hearts like Mary’s -

hearts of patient expectation,

hearts full of faith and wonder,

hearts made glad with joy and hope.

Teach us to listen for Your voice,

in the wisdom of the elderly and cry of the newborn,

in the poor and the outcast,

in the students in our hallways and their families,

in our school staff and in our homes.

May this Advent season be a time of patience and peace.

We make this prayer in the name of Jesus,

our Hope and Light for the journey home.

**Amen**

And now, let us be attentive to God’s word.

**READING:** (Luke 1:26-35 )

A reading from the Gospel of Luke:

In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son and you will name Him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High and the Lord God will give to Him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever and of His kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the most high will overshadow you; therefore, the child to be born will be Holy; He will be called Son of God."

The word of the Lord  
Thanks be to God

**REFLECTION:**

Mary listened to Gabriel's message and pondered.

*Ponder...*

What a wonderful word! What is God's message of good news in my life?

Maybe it's...

- you are my precious child.
- I love you with an everlasting love.
- I am always with you.
- your life is a gift.
- I have beautiful plans for you.

(pause)

Let us take 30 seconds to ponder the message of good news that God has for us in this Advent season.

**OPTIONAL: SECOND REFLECTION**

The writer of Psalm 46 tells us, "Be still and know that I am God."

Being still in a busy world is our Advent challenge. We live with so many loud noises and distractions. Sometimes it is difficult to hear messages of hope, faith, joy and love.

We are called to slow down in this holy season, and like Mary, to listen in the quiet of our hearts.

Mary listened to Gabriel's message, and pondered it for many days. Most of us do hear the messages of hope, faith, joy and love. But do we ponder them?

Let us learn to listen deeply with wise ears.

Let us give one another the gift of good listening.

Let us take time each day to be still, to hear and ponder God's message for us...

**ADVENT WREATH CANDLE LIGHTING:**

(Prayer to be read as first Advent candle is lit)

God our Father, we light this first candle of Advent

As a sign of our hope in Jesus,

The true Light who came into the world

To show us the way to You.

Help us to hear Your message of love

During this holy time of waiting.

Like Mary and Joseph,

May we be ready

To welcome Jesus each day,

And to sing His praises with Joy

As we celebrate His birth.

We make this prayer to You in His name.

Amen

And let us bring before the Father all our needs, using the words Jesus taught us: *Our Father...*

**CLOSING PRAYER:**

Gracious God,

You speak to us in whispers and symphonies.

Teach us to listen with our hearts,

to listen beyond words,

to listen into wisdom,

to listen for Your voice in baby's cry,

to listen for Your voice in plea of the outcast,

to listen for Your voice in creation,

to listen for Your voice in one another.

We make this prayer in the name of the Child Jesus,

whose love embraces us all.

**Amen**

And may Almighty God bless us: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

**CLOSING SONG:**

Please join in our closing song...

Suggested --

*O Come, O Come Emmanuel* (CBW III #312)

*O Come, Divine Messiah* (CBW III #310)

*Listen, My People* (CBW III #309)

*What a Strange Way to Save the World* – 4Him, (CD) *The Season of Love*