

# Prepare Him Room

Advent Family Devotions



Amy Welborn

# Introduction

During Advent, we are preparing our hearts and our lives for Jesus.

But hasn't Jesus already come?

Of course. But with our human limitations, we hear the promise of complete peace and joy with hearts that are sometimes broken. We see, but only dimly, and not yet face to face.

Like the people of ancient Israel, we take two steps to God and one step back, failing to love as we ought. That's why, each year during Advent, we prepare to welcome Jesus once again.

Families have all sorts of preparation traditions. Some may directly point to Jesus, and others may not seem to at first glance. The purpose of this booklet is to help us see how so many of our preparations point directly to the coming of the Messiah.

We don't have to start from scratch. Jesus calls to us from where we are right now. Perhaps this devotional will help you and your family discern his invitation and loving presence in what you already do during this exciting season of Advent.

## *How to Use This Booklet*

This devotional was written to be used by families of all shapes and sizes and from any Christian tradition. It's designed to be used in any way that suits your family's habits and needs.

- It can be used morning, noon or night.
- The various readings and responses can be read by any family member who can, of course, read. The vocabulary and sentence structure of the composed devotions are simple and can easily be handled by an elementary school-aged reader.
- While this devotion doesn't include specific discussion questions or activities, it is hoped that your family will be inspired to reflect, talk and act during your family prayer time.
- Be flexible, open and relaxed in your family's prayer. Enjoy the moments that God has given for this kind of shared prayer.

— Amy Welborn

## First Sunday of Advent

# Wake-up Call

Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.

*Mark 13:35-37*

**Reader:** *O Lord, we praise you.*

**All:** We are waiting in hope.

It's so dark in here! What should we do?

Well, if it's dark, we naturally seek light. Find the switch on the wall. Open the curtains, find a flashlight or light a candle. We want to see.

The Advent wreath that we Christians have in our homes is a circle with four candles on it, one for each week of this preparation time. The circle reminds us that God has no beginning and no end. His love surrounds us forever. The candles remind us that Jesus is the light who helps us see.

As Jesus tells us, we must stay awake, watching and waiting for him. He is never far away, but if we don't know where to look, we can miss him. He waits for us in happy moments and in sad ones. His love reaches us when we are feeling glad and when we are suffering. When we are awake and watching, we see Jesus in big beautiful mountains, a baby's tiny toes and our family's life together.

Advent begins. The light is shining. Let's stay awake, watching for an ever-brightening light.

**Reader:** *Jesus, you are our light.*

**All:** Come, Lord Jesus.

## Monday, First Week of Advent

# A Message of Peace

In days to come

the mountain of the LORD's house  
shall be established as the highest of the mountains,  
and shall be raised above the hills...  
they shall beat their swords into plowshares,  
and their spears into pruning hooks;  
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,  
neither shall they learn war any more.

*Isaiah 2:1, 4*

**Reader** *Lord, we praise you.*

**All:** We are waiting in hope.

Check the mailbox. Any cards today?

It's the time of year to send greetings. Some people buy cards, others create them. Some families send letters with their cards, and others include photographs.

Even with a phone call or an email, this is the time of year for reaching out.

Cards and greetings are fun to make, send and really nice to receive. Why? Because they are messages sent in love. They bind us closer together to people we love very much, to people we might not know very well and even bring people who have trouble loving each other just a little closer together.

When we send a greeting, we open our hearts a little bit more to love. We open our hearts, we share, we reach out. Even for just a moment, we choose peace. God invited us to share in his peace through prophets like Isaiah. Above all, he gives us peace in Jesus.

**Reader:** *Jesus, we reach out in peace and love.*

**All:** Come, Lord Jesus.

## Tuesday, First Week of Advent

# Our Family's Story

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,  
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,  
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of counsel and might,  
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

*Isaiah 11:1-2*

**Reader:** *Lord, we praise you.*

**All:** We are waiting in hope.

We all have a family tree. We're all shoots growing out from very deep roots, and they come from all around the world. There's a way of celebrating Jesus' spiritual family tree during Advent. It's called a "Jesse Tree" after King David's father, who was named Jesse.

A Jesse Tree can be made from the branch of a real tree or cut out of paper. Jesse Tree ornaments are symbols of the important moments in the history of the people of God. They are symbols of Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David and more. The symbols help us remember God's care for his children and how he is always ready to forgive us and give us another chance to love.

Jesus has a family tree and so do you and I. The amazing thing is that it's really the same one. All through Advent, we're listening to our family story. It's the story about how we all need mercy and how Jesus has come among us, merciful, wise and kind.

**Reader:** *Jesus, you are the One who saves us.*

**All:** Come, Lord Jesus.

## Wednesday, First Week of Advent

# Ways to Help

On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples  
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines...

And he will destroy on this mountain  
the shroud that is cast over all peoples,  
the sheet that is spread over all nations;  
he will swallow up death forever.

Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces...

*Isaiah 25:6-8*

**Reader:** *Lord, we praise you.*

**All:** We are waiting in hope.

There's another kind of tree we see in churches and even stores during these weeks leading up to Christmas. Some call it an "Angel Tree." Have you seen them? On these trees hang tags containing the suggestions for ways to help people in need. You can pick a tag and find a way to help. You can donate a toy or some clothing. You can give some money that might help a hungry family buy food in your own town or far away in another country. Perhaps your family has helped—or been helped—by people picking tags off the Angel Tree.

These trees remind us to look for Jesus in the world around us. Jesus came as a helpless child, and even today, he still does. The trees are signs of God's promise to share his feast of love with the whole world. They are signs that we are invited to help set the table for the feast and invite the hungry to have hope and to come and be filled.

**Reader:** *Jesus, work through us to help others.*

**All:** Come, Lord Jesus.

## Thursday, First Week of Advent

# The Rock of Advent

Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock.

*Matthew 7:24-25*

**Reader:** *Lord, we praise you.*

**All:** We are waiting in hope.

Is this a busy time for your family? It is for ours! There are school and church programs, visits to prepare for, food to make, lists to check off, decorations to finish—and there's still work and school!

Sometimes it feels as if all the activities get in the way of Jesus. To find him in all of that? It's hopeless!

But is it really hopeless? After all, this is the life we have. Maybe it's a good idea to try to look for Jesus in those busy times instead of in spite of them.

If we let Jesus be our solid rock every day, we'll see signs of him, even in the busy times. Why are we gathering at a party or social? To celebrate him. Why are we shopping? To share love, which comes from him. Why are we singing? To praise him.

We seek him in the quiet times, that's true. And we need more of that! But if we just wait for the quiet, what hints and signs might we miss along the way?

**Reader:** *Jesus, you are our rock in everything we do.*

**All:** Come, Lord Jesus.

## Friday, First Week of Advent

# What Do We Really Need?

As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, crying loudly, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!" When he entered the house, the blind men came to him; and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to him, "Yes, Lord." Then he touched their eyes and said, "According to your faith let it be done to you." And their eyes were opened.

*Matthew 9:27-30*

**Reader:** *Lord, we praise you.*

**All:** We are waiting in hope.

Lists and wishes are a part of this time of year. What do you want? What do you need? What do you think would give you a little jolt of joy on Christmas morning?

The whole human family travels through history carrying a wish list in our hearts. We are all different, but somehow the same too. We are all, in our own way, like these two blind men, following Jesus, crying out for mercy, understanding and healing.

And what a generous Father we have. For in a few weeks, we will celebrate, knowing that he has given us what we really, in our deepest hearts, desire and need, spoken in our own language, wrapped in our own skin.

**Reader:** *Jesus, we hear your merciful words and reach for your healing touch.*

**All:** Come, Lord Jesus.



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## Advent Family Devotions

*Like the rest of us,* families make their way toward Christmas in a world that is already celebrating, if not the coming of Christ, at least the season of parties and gift-giving. How do we keep a focus on Jesus and the Incarnation amid the busy-ness of getting ready for December 25? Author Amy Welborn offers families simple ways to find the gospel message in what is going on all around them, even in preparations that can get hectic at times. These brief but pointed devotions will keep a family centered on what is most important not only at this time of the year, but every day.

This book, along with many other Creative Communications for the Parish products, is available on [amazonkindle](#) and [nook](#)

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WB2