

HOPE-FULL LIVING

SPECIAL EDITION

Celebrate the
season of

Advent

• Daily Devotions for This Holy Season •



WELCOME TO

HOPE-FULL LIVING

▪ Daily Devotions for This Holy Season ▪

In our younger days, the weeks of Advent more often than not were consumed with “getting”—what we might be getting as gifts under the tree, what days we would be getting off from school and what parties, concerts, programs or gatherings we would be getting to go to in order to celebrate the upcoming birth of the Christ Child.

But in our later years, the emphasis during these Advent days starts to tend more toward “giving”—what special present will we be giving to a loved one that will light up their faces and bring joy to their lives, what food or treats will we be giving to others to thank them for their friendship and help this year, what messages of our hope and happiness in the birth of our Savior, Jesus, will we be giving to people near and far through our Christmas cards and letters.

“God loves a cheerful giver,” the Bible tells us (2 Corinthians 9:7). I pray these devotions give you good cheer and help you give cheer in Jesus’ name.

*Dr. Rich Bimler
Honorary Editor
Ambassador of Health, Hope and Aging
rbimler@gmail.com*

SUNDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

A Word Before Advent

For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

Psalm 95:3

We do not know what trials, temptations or sorrows we will face in the days ahead, but on our Advent journey we will not be walking the King's highway alone. Christ our King walks with us every step of the way. Along the way we will pause for rest stops to light a candle and to receive hope, love, joy and peace.

We will have friends walking with us to love us, to bring us joy and peace and to give us new hope as we share God's Word with each other. We forgive and love each other even as Christ forgives and loves us and binds us into one holy family. We will sing Advent songs of joy along the way, resounding with our alleluias on Christmas Day. Advent, here we come!

*Leo Symmank
Seabrook, TX*

Lord, open thou my heart to hear. Through these Advent messages now draw near. Wipe away my every fear. O Lord, to me you are so dear. Amen.

Listen: Take a walk with a neighbor and along the way, listen to what he or she has to say.

Read: Psalm 91



MONDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

Open Up!

Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.

Psalm 24:7

Do you remember the hymn based on this psalm? It is one of my favorites. During Advent we hear the cry of the ancient herald: “Be lifted up, O ancient doors!” The gates of Jerusalem opened to receive the victorious King. The Church, the New Jerusalem, opens its gates to receive the victorious Christmas King. Each one of us, who make up the Church, may use Advent to open up the gates again, to receive our King and Lord and God.

We open our hearts through confession, removing the sin that would keep the doors shut. We open our hearts by remembering the goodness and love of our God. Our hearts open as we pray to and praise the Lord. Open up today! Jesus the King is coming.

*Don Schatz
Kenmore, WA*

I open my heart to you, Lord. Come, Lord Jesus.
Amen.

Sing: Find the hymn “Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates,” and sing it to the Lord.

Read: Psalm 24

TUESDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

Preparing for Him

For nothing will be impossible with God.

Luke 1:37

When I was a child, I marveled at the preparations during the Advent season. As an adult, I treasure the time as we prepare our hearts and homes for our Savior's birth. Advent wreaths and calendars, Christmas trees and ornaments and church worship services remind us of the reason we celebrate Christmas—Jesus' birth.

Just as there was no room at the inn for Mary and Joseph and their unborn son, our society often doesn't have room for Jesus in their lives. However, we all need him more than ever! His grace, forgiveness and love are the reasons he was brought into our lives. He is a beacon of light and love in a dark world. By the power of the Spirit, prepare a place for him in your life and you will forever experience his light and saving grace!

*Betsy Becker Niedringhaus
Ballwin, MO*

Dear heavenly Father, thank you for the gift of your Son Jesus. Amen.

Reflect: What are some past or current Christmas traditions you treasure?

Read: John 1:4-5



WEDNESDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

A Pitcher Awaits

For I will pour out water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants.

Isaiah 44:3

Each year our family gathers around the Christmas tree to watch the oldest child hang the ceramic pitcher ornament. This generation is the sixth to honor the miniature decoration. Those of us old enough to imagine our ancestors hanging this same piece rejoice that they, too, anticipated Jesus' birth together.

This empty pitcher represents our thirst for Jesus' presence always. During Advent we look at it excitedly, knowing it will soon be filled with the blessing of Jesus' arrival. He is coming to pour out blessings on all of us!

*Lisa Heule
Littleton, CO*

Father, thank you for sending your Son to fill our emptiness with love and everlasting peace. Amen.

Hold: Cradle a cup or pitcher and wait with God for a few moments.

Read: John 4:13-14; Joel 2:28-29

THURSDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

Brought to the Banquet

The Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

Luke 12:40

A young girl stands at the door waiting. It's her birthday. A cake sits on a table. It's all set. But when the time comes for the party, none of the guests arrive. The birthday girl throws herself into her mother's arms. "Mommy, why didn't they come?"

Before he was born, unlike the little girl, we weren't exactly waiting for Jesus, but God had promised to send him. So, of course, he came. Once he'd completed his "seek and save" mission, he invited us to his banquet as honored guests. None of us would have shown up at the hall except that the Spirit of God drew us there by faith and keeps us there to this day. We are excited to welcome him.

The only thing left to say? "Come, Lord Jesus!" Only one thing left to hear: "Surely, I am coming soon!" (Revelation 22:20).

*David A. Boyd
Staunton, VA*

Heavenly Father, help me wait patiently for the presence of Jesus. Amen.

Help: Consider encouraging others with words of hope while you wait for Jesus.

Read: Revelation 22:12

FRIDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

When God Speaks

Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Isaiah 7:14

In Scripture, when something important is about to happen, our Lord speaks with clarity to his people. God sent the angel Gabriel to deliver a message to Mary. God spoke to Joseph in a dream. The message to both: “Pay attention! The promise of the long-awaited Savior is about to be fulfilled.”

We can now put an exclamation mark on the significance of these moments, not only in the lives of Mary and Joseph, but upon the world. When God speaks in Scripture, in worship and in prayer, we pay attention. We listen with the certainty of our heavenly Father’s enduring love and forgiveness. Throughout this season we recall the fulfillment of God’s promise of saving grace, once again celebrating the birth of Jesus, the Son of God and our Savior.

*Judith Christian
St. Louis, MO*

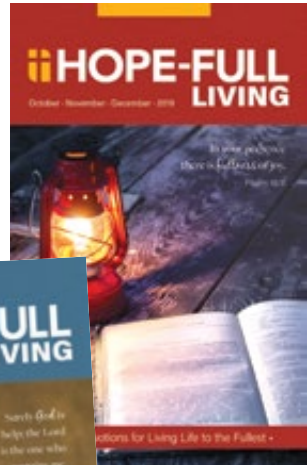
Thank you, heavenly Father, for your gift of enduring love and forgiveness. Amen.

Replace: Reread the Scripture references, replacing periods with exclamation marks.

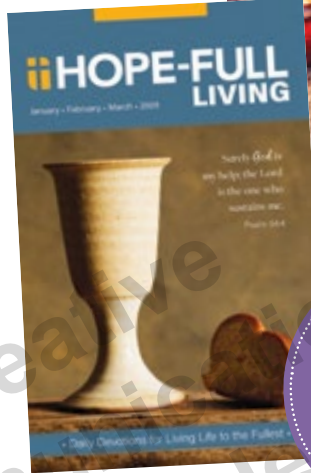
Read: Isaiah 7:14-15; Matthew 1:18-25

HOPE-FULL LIVING

- Daily Devotions for Living Life to the Fullest •



The daily devotions in *Hope-Full Living* help to inspire seniors with the assurance that “This very day, I have a body, a mind, a spirit and a message—God’s rejuvenating Gospel message to and through me—to share with my world, my friends and my Lord.”



AS LOW AS
\$6.76
PER YEAR*

Hope-Full Living is not just a daily devotional. It also includes suggestions for putting hope into action each and every day.

To subscribe, call toll-free: 1-855-325-4673

(mention promo code 51800HF9)

— Outside U.S. please call 1-937-528-6190 —

Order online at: www.hopefulldevotions.com

*WHEN YOU ORDER 20 OR MORE COPIES.

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

Edited by Rich Bimler, Mark Zimmermann and Carol Geisler. Design by Jamie Wyatt. Cover image: iStock. © 2019 by Creative Communications for the Parish, a division of Bayard, Inc. 1564 Fencorp Drive, Fenton, MO 63026, (800) 325-9414. www.creativecommunications.com. Printed in the USA. All rights reserved.

HF9