

# Daily Advent prayers – Week Four

## Day 22 (23 Dec)

**"He gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity."**

Matthew 2:16b

### **Reflect**

The charity Open Doors reports that 322 Christians are killed every month because of their faith and 214 churches destroyed. For many of our brothers and sisters, to follow Jesus is to face the possibility of suffering. How can we help? Are there practical steps we can take to show our unity in Christ?

### **Prayer**

Thank you God that you see all that your children go through. Thank you that no tear is shed that you don't see and thank you that you are a just God. Lord, we pray for the persecuted Church. May your people know they are not forgotten. Bring comfort and strength. We pray for those who have lost loved ones through the violence of others. Let them know that the Immanuel is with them. Lord have mercy. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## Day 23 (24 Dec)

**"For no word of God will ever fail. 'I am the Lord's servant', Mary answered."**

Luke 1:37-38

### **Reflect**

To be the Lord's servant is to submit our lives to the will of God. It is to say, "God, you have loved me with an everlasting love and I am yours. Whatever you want and wherever you want me to go I will do it." For some of us that involves pain and suffering. We can learn so much from our brothers and sisters who have to endure. The ones who understand what it means to take up their cross daily. Those who trust even in the darkest moments. Those who carry on loving and forgiving in the

face of hatred. What is God teaching you through the persecuted Church?

### **Prayer**

Lord, we thank you for what we learn from one another. We love the miracle of the worldwide Church. People of all ages brought together through your amazing love. Those of every tongue, tribe and nation. Help us God never to lose sight of the global Church and all you are doing in and through it. Amen.

## Day 24 (25 Dec)

**"And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.'"**

Isaiah 9:2a

### **Reflect**

Let's begin our advent journey thinking about those who are living in darkness. They may be on the other side of the world from us, or right next door. There are many reasons for walking in darkness - fear, loneliness, oppression, depression, poverty or violence are just a few. God sees those in darkness and becomes light for them.

### **Prayer**

Lord, we name before you those we know who are going through times of darkness. We think of them and ask, gracious God, that you may bring them light, hope, love and direction. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## Day 25 (26 Dec)

**"Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God."**

Luke 2:13

### Reflect

According to the Guinness World Records, the largest choir ever assembled was over 120,000 in India. They must have made some noise. Can you imagine a different choir, a heavenly one? I picture the most amazing group of singers lighting up all of creation with a song of proclamation, joy and hope all mixed together. Wow, how great that must have been. Sometimes we get caught up in so many things at this time of year that we miss the fact that this is an eternal celebration. God has done an amazing thing. Things will never be the same again. Why don't you sing or have a dance. Who knows, angels may be joining in.

### Prayer

Lord of beauty and majesty, you revealed to simple shepherds the very joy of heaven in Jesus, but you were proclaiming to the whole of creation that things had changed forever. The Messiah, the anointed one, had come. Lord, we thank you that that same Jesus is the one we meet by faith today. The Jesus of new life, forgiveness and hope is with us. Hallelujah, we praise your name and join with all creation in celebration. Amen.

Day 26 (27 Dec)

**"Glory to God in the highest heaven and on earth peace to those on whom His favour rests."**

Luke 2:14

### Reflect

Stop in the busyness and find peace. Give yourself a moment, still yourself. God loves you and is with you. Receive the knowledge that His favour rests on you. In Jesus the fullness of the favour of God has come. It has come for you. Think of all it means this Christmas to know that the outworking of that first Christmas is with us now. Christ has come, salvation has come, God is with us.

### Prayer

Lord, I receive your love with joy. I welcome you here, God, You are good and you are worthy to be praised. You wrap me in arms of grace, you smile on me. I am yours and you are here. Thank you Jesus for being my Saviour, my hope and my friend. Amen.

Day 27 (28 Dec)

**"My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour."**

Isaiah 9:2a

### Reflect

Let's begin our advent journey thinking about those who are living in darkness. They may be on the other side of the world from us, or right next door. There are many reasons for walking in darkness - fear, loneliness, oppression, depression, poverty or violence are just a few. God sees those in darkness and becomes light for them.

### Prayer

Lord, we name before you those we know who are going through times of darkness. We think of them and ask, gracious God, that you may bring them light, hope, love and direction. In Jesus' name, Amen.

