

for Advent and the Christmas Season 2018–19

# SACRED SPACE

December 2, 2018 to January 13, 2019

from the website [www.sacredspace.ie](http://www.sacredspace.ie)

Prayer from the Irish Jesuits





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## Contents

How to Use This Booklet	1
The First Week of Advent	2
The Second Week of Advent	13
The Third Week of Advent	24
The Fourth Week of Advent/Christmas	38
First Week of Christmas	51
The Epiphany of Our Lord/The Second Week of Christmas	64
An Advent Retreat	78

## **The Presence of God**

Bless all who worship you, almighty God,  
from the rising of the sun to its setting:  
from your goodness enrich us,  
by your love inspire us,  
by your Spirit guide us,  
by your power protect us,  
in your mercy receive us,  
now and always.

## How to Use This Booklet

During each week of Advent, begin by reading the “Something to think and pray about each day this week.” Then go through “The Presence of God,” “Freedom,” and “Consciousness” steps to help you prepare yourself to hear the Word of God speaking to you. In the next step, “The Word,” turn to the Scripture reading for each day of the week. Inspiration points are provided if you need them. Then return to the “Conversation” and “Conclusion” steps. Follow this process every day of Advent.

The Advent retreat at the back of this book follows a similar structure: an invitation to experience stillness, a Scripture passage and reflection points, and suggestions for prayer; you may find it useful to move back and forth between the daily reflections and the retreat.

The First Week of Advent  
**December 2—December 8, 2018**

Something to think and pray about each day this week:

What is a hero? A hero is a person who takes action to help people. That is what the Holy Spirit calls us to do. When the Spirit descended on Mary after the angel Gabriel told her she was to be the mother of Jesus, what did she do? She took action. She packed her things and journeyed to her cousin Elizabeth. To do what? To serve her. When the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus after his baptism by John, what did he do? He took action and did what? He began his ministry and began serving. When the Spirit descended on the apostles at Pentecost, what did they do? They relinquished fear and began serving the people. Not just one group of people but all people, of all nations.

We too are called to serve, to not be afraid. With the Holy Spirit already dwelling in us, there is no time to waste. We need to take action now and assist those around us, whether it's a family member, a friend, a coworker, a stranger on the street, our environment, our nation, or our world.

—Gary Jansen, *The 15-Minute Prayer Solution*

## **The Presence of God**

As I sit here, the beating of my heart,  
the ebb and flow of my breathing,  
the movements of my mind  
are all signs of God's ongoing creation of me.  
I pause for a moment and become aware  
of this presence of God within me.

## **Freedom**

Everything has the potential to draw from me a fuller  
love and life.

Yet my desires are often fixed, caught, on illusions of  
fulfillment.

I ask that God, through my freedom, may orches-  
trate my desires in a vibrant loving melody rich in  
harmony.

## **Consciousness**

I ask, how am I within myself today? Am I particu-  
larly tired, stressed, or off-form? If any of these char-  
acteristics apply, can I try to let go of the concerns  
that disturb me?

## **The Word**

I read the word of God slowly, a few times over, and I listen to what God is saying to me. (Please turn to the Scripture on the following pages. Inspiration points are there, should you need them. When you are ready, return here to continue.)

## **Conversation**

I begin to talk with Jesus about the Scripture I have just read. What part of it strikes a chord in me? Perhaps the words of a friend or a story I have heard recently will slowly rise to the surface of my consciousness. If so, does the story throw light on what the Scripture passage may be trying to say to me?

## **Conclusion**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,  
World without end. Amen.