



Year A – 2nd Sunday of Advent: Advent: A Season of Preparation

***{Start with reviewing the previous meeting's challenge or discuss prior to sharing this week's challenge.}**

Let's Begin: Think about how the challenge went for the last session. What went well? What was difficult?

Opening Prayer:

Begin with a brief moment of silence shaking off any and all distractions or difficulties of the day and remembering that God is always with us.

Read: **Matthew 3:1-12** - <https://bible.usccb.org/> - 12/04/2022, 12/07/2025, 12/10/2028

After the Reading Conclude with this prayer: Heavenly Father, You are always at work. You are always moving and leading, guiding and calling. Give us the grace and strength to see You at work in our lives. Help us to slow down and patiently savor Your work in us. During this season of Advent, we remember how You came to us. We invite You to come into our hearts NOW as we await Your final coming. Amen.

Reflection or Discussion Question:

1. What is John the Baptist telling us to do to prepare for the coming of Jesus? (Some examples: Prepare the way through repentance, Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance, Do not presume you are saved by your fathers deeds, and humility -I am not worthy to carry His sandals.)
2. What comes to mind when you think of the Advent season?

YouTube Video: Advent: More than a Chocolate Calendar, Fr. Mike Schmitz (6.25 min) - <https://youtu.be/SA-gx-PWB0A>

Reflection or Discussion Questions:

3. Are there any initial thoughts/feelings the video brought up for you?
4. Fr. Mike talks about advent as a, "wholehearted and joyful season of preparation for Christ's Coming." Have you ever had an Advent season like that? Why or why not?
5. Who is a person you know who exhibits "JOY" as opposed to just "happiness?" What are some things that you can incorporate in your life to make you more joyful?
6. Fr. Mike reminds us that Advent is not just in preparation of Christmas but also of Christ's second coming, and how Christ comes now. Have you ever thought of that before? What do you think that would really look like?
7. Fr. Mike talks about saying, "NO" to the various distractions going on during the season of Advent. Do you feel like you have "room" for Jesus in your life today or that you could make more room for Him? What will you say "NO" to or reduce; to allow for more space for Christ to enter into your life?

Session Challenges: {Choose one or both}

- Create an Advent season plan. What will you do? What will you NOT do? Share this with one other person.
- Think about one person in your life that needs JOY. Really consider how you can help this person. Maybe through food, paying their heat bill, offering faith and support, giving a listening ear and comfort, or spending time with them. Make this your silent Christmas gift to Jesus to fill this person's need and ask Jesus to open your understanding of Christmas JOY through this act.

Closing Prayer: (Leaders: We recommended offering time during the closing prayer for participants to offer personal intentions.)

Jesus, give us the grace to actively wait. Help us to say, "no" at the right times so that we can say, "yes" to Your grace and follow Your direction in our lives. Amen.

{Optional additional Readings} Sunday Reading 1: **IS 11:1-10**; Sunday Reading 2: **Rom 15:4-9**