

ADVENT 2023



One of the remarkable challenges that arose from the Society of Mary's (Marists) 2017 General Chapter was the clarion call for all Marists to live a life of contemplation.

"Contemplation as the energy source, the mystical heart of Marist mission, is intimately linked with our identity as Marist To form a communion for mission, we need to deepen the contemplative dimension of our lives. With Jesus at the center, we can, like Mary, be missionaries of hope."

(2017 General Chapter, 30)

The Marists encourage you to explore how Mary invites you into silent contemplation during this Advent season. The daily thoughts on this calendar, shared by Marists and Marists friends provide a source of reflection this Advent.



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
December 3	December 4	December 5	December 6	December 7	December 8	December 9
<p>As we walk with Christ, it is essential to contemplate like Mary. She, who knew how to say yes without knowing the future. She, who knew how to welcome the limitlessness of God into the limit of her being. She, who, by keeping everything in her heart, knew how to discern the signs of the times with her eyes fixed on the Savior. After all, contemplating means seeing with hope every moment received from God.</p> <p><i>O come, O come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel, That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear.</i></p> <p>Contributor: Fr. David Raymundo Sánchez Garduño, SM</p> <p>Marist Ministry: International Novice Director, Society of Mary</p> <p>Quote Source: Original quote</p>	<p>“Holy Mary, Mother of God, Pray for us sinners now And at the hour of our death.”</p> <p>“The ‘work of Mary’ is her desire to see the Gospel of Jesus take root in our contemporary world.” Advent is meant to be an earnest time of spiritual self-reflection and evaluation as we prepare for Christ’s birth in the world and our place at the end of time. Mary is our model to lead us to perfect love.</p> <p><i>O come, O come, Thou Lord of Might, Who to Thy tribes, on Sinai’s height, In ancient times didst give the law, In cloud, and majesty, and awe.</i></p> <p>Contributor: Frank McCloskey</p> <p>Marist Ministry: St. Thea Bowman Racial Justice Ministry, Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Church, Brookhaven, Georgia</p> <p>Quote Source: Original quote</p>	<p>Mary invites me into silent contemplation during this Advent season: “As for her mother, she kept all these things in her heart”. (Lk. 2:51b)</p> <p>To facilitate the breakthrough of the Divine, I must look at my inner self and discover God everywhere, inside and outside; discover God melted in my love and my love melted in God’s.</p> <p><i>O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free Thine own from Satan’s tyranny; From depths of hell Thy people save And give them victory o’er the grave</i></p> <p>Contributor: Fr. Hector J. Cruz-Lesbros, SM</p> <p>Marist Ministry: Pastor, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Tampa, Florida</p> <p>Quote Source: Original quote inspired by Paula D’Arcy’s “Breakthrough of the Divine” seminar, San Antonio, Texas 2016</p>	<p>“Mary’s peace was a dynamic peace. For her as for us life was a battle, and she fought it valiantly. Christ is the world’s greatest sufferer and the world’s most joyous and loving sufferer. No one ever shared so intimately in the temptations and passion of Christ and in the perfection of His dispositions as Mary, His Mother.”</p> <p><i>O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer Our spirits by Thine advent here; Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, And death’s dark shadows put to flight.</i></p> <p>Contributor: Susan Illis</p> <p>Marist Ministry: Archivist, Archives of the Society of Mary, U.S. Province, Atlanta, Georgia</p> <p>Quote Source: Rev. Joseph Buckley, SM, Sermon, Centenary of Lourdes Grotto, Convent, Louisiana, 1976</p>	<p>“And Mary said to the angel, “How shall this be, ...let it be to me according to your word.” (Lk. 1:34) “But Mary kept these things and pondered them in heart.” (Lk. 2:19) “His mother said to the servants, “do whatever he tells you.” (Jn. 2:5)</p> <p>Mary’s words are rare, focused and meaningful. She was open to what she could not know, and said yes. She pondered the mystery of God within her. When asked she told others what to do - “whatever he tells you” - the same as she did. Pondering mandates contemplation - listening.</p> <p><i>O come, Thou Key of David, come, And open wide our heavenly home; Make safe the way that leads on high, And close the path to misery.</i></p> <p>Contributor: Fr. Bruce Lery, SM</p> <p>Marist Ministry: Marist Center of the West, San Francisco, California</p> <p>Quote Source: Original quote</p>	<p>“As long as we stand in our own place in the world, we run the risk of being caught up in our own interests and ulterior motives. But at Nazareth we, too, can learn the wisdom that comes from seeing things from God’s point of view. Nazareth also serves as an approach to life, which simply means to “ponder the things of God” and treasure them in one’s heart.”</p> <p><i>O come, Thou Wisdom from on high, And order all things, far and nigh; To us the path of knowledge show, And cause us in her ways to go.</i></p> <p>Contributor: Mary Ghisolfo</p> <p>Marist Ministry: Notre Dame des Victoires, San Francisco, California</p> <p>Quote Source: “Sharing the Marist Way” pamphlet, Mary in Nazareth, p. 13, Marist School, Atlanta, Georgia</p>	<p>“Our spirituality, which is mystical and practical, responds to the reality and circumstances of today’s world.... At our best, we are instruments of God’s mercy working to help others taste the boundless love of the Lord, especially those who find themselves on the margins.... Mary is the icon of God’s Spirit. As her fellow disciples, we pray that with God’s grace, we become the same.”</p> <p><i>O come, Desire of nations, bind In one the hearts of all mankind; Bid Thou our sad divisions cease, And be Thyself our King of peace.</i></p> <p>Contributor: Fr. Ted Keating, SM</p> <p>Marist Ministry: Director for Vocation and Formation, Society of Mary, U.S. Province, Washington, DC</p> <p>Quote Source: Original quote inspired by the 2013 Statement of Identity, U.S. Province of the Marists</p>

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
December 10	December 11	December 12	December 13	December 14	December 15	December 16
<p>Let us contemplate loving all people, especially our enemies, during this Advent season. Being slow to condemn, and quick to forgive, as was, and is, Our Mother Mary. Reaching out in word and deed to comfort others in all circumstances, even when it hurts our pride to be humble. May we see ourselves as peacemakers, and not antagonists of peace, in every situation, asking Our Lady for patience and strength.</p> <p><i>O come, O come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel, That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear.</i></p> <p>Contributor: Cheryl D'Alessio Marist Ministry: Marist Laity, South Florida Quote Source: Original quote</p>	<p>Fr. Ellerman, SM '58 pointed out that the Angel Gabriel's greeting, "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you," is a rebuke to the spirit of this secular age that argues God must die so human beings can be unfettered to pursue greatness and flourish. Instead, Mary proclaims the Lord's greatness and rejoices in God, her savior. Marist students are imbued with the spirit of Mary, empowering them to rebuke the spirit of this secular age and, in the words of Fr. Colin, do great things for God.</p> <p><i>O come, O come, Thou Lord of Might, Who to Thy tribes, on Sinai's height, In ancient times didst give the law, In cloud, and majesty, and awe.</i></p> <p>Contributor: Fr. Bill Rowland, SM Marist Ministry: Rector, Marist School, Atlanta, Georgia Quote Source: Original quote</p>	<p>"Luke presents Mary as a model of mindfulness, carefully taking time to engage in deep listening so she can discern with wisdom and arrive at some understanding of the life-changing experiences associated with giving birth and nurturing a newborn. She is unaware of the storms she will be asked to walk through, but her muted pondering will shape the course of her ongoing trust and endurance." Following Mary's example, let us take time this season to ponder.</p> <p><i>O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free Thine own from Satan's tyranny; From depths of hell Thy people save And give them victory o'er the grave</i></p> <p>Contributor: Julie Pack Marist Ministry: Director of Religious Education, Notre Dame Academy, Duluth, Georgia Quote Source: "Mary pondered all these things in her heart" (Luke 2:19) by Dr. Laurie Woods in Catholic Outlook Magazine, 2022</p>	<p>This Advent we can look to Mary as a model in prayer and in discipleship. Mary pondered what God was asking of her and humbly said yes, relying on God's help in becoming part of God's plan. Advent is a time when I can humbly contemplate God's gifts in my life and how God is asking me to generously use them for others.</p> <p><i>O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer Our spirits by Thine advent here; Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, And death's dark shadows put to flight.</i></p> <p>Contributor: Fr. Joseph Hindelang, SM Marist Ministry: Provincial, Society of Mary, U.S. Province, Washington, DC Quote Source: Original quote</p>	<p>Shortly after being re-connected with the Marists as a business manager/assistant vocation director at the seminary in Berkely, CA, a comment was made (perhaps by Fr. Tom Ellerman, SM), that even though I was away from the Marists for years that "Mary never let's go". This has always been a source of inspiration that even after many absent years, her effect on one is always there.</p> <p><i>O come, Thou Key of David, come, And open wide our heavenly home; Make safe the way that leads on high, And close the path to misery.</i></p> <p>Contributor: Jack Ridout Marist Ministry: Today's Marists Editorial Board Member, San Francisco, California Quote Source: Original quote</p>	<p>Fr. Colin spoke of Mary as the support of the Church at its beginning and in the end times. With that in mind, he said in 1866: "We must fill ourselves with her spirit, and this spirit we must draw from her heart." He believed the apostles consulted her "because she had the new law (of Christ) written in her heart." May we draw our reflections from Mary's heart this Advent.</p> <p><i>O come, Thou Wisdom from on high, And order all things, far and nigh; To us the path of knowledge show, And cause us in her ways to go.</i></p> <p>Contributor: Fr. Philip Parent, SM Marist Ministry: Director, Our Lady of Lourdes Center, Boston, Massachusetts Quote Source: Original quote</p>	<p>I've returned continually throughout the years to a provocative and beautiful poem by Denise Levertov called, "The Annunciation," that imagines the holy communion between the Blessed Mother and God Almighty. Within this profound mystery is the challenge of our own fundamental response to God. God's invitation is constant and dynamic, yet always respectful of our humanity. How intimate is that yes! Inspired by the model of Holy Mary, create the time and space during Advent for such a profound exercise in contemplation.</p> <p><i>O come, Desire of nations, bind In one the hearts of all mankind; Bid Thou our sad divisions cease, And be Thyself our King of peace.</i></p> <p>Contributor: J.D. Childs Marist Ministry: President, Marist School, Atlanta, Georgia Quote Source: Original quote inspired by a poem by Denise Levertov, "The Annunciation"</p>

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
December 17	December 18	December 19	December 20	December 21	December 22	December 23
<p>“Contemplation is a gaze of faith, fixed on Jesus. I look at him and he looks at me”**</p> <p>“Mary is the safest, easiest, shortest, and most perfect way of approaching Jesus. One must surrender themselves to her, body and soul, without reserve in order to belong entirely to Jesus.”**</p> <p><i>O come, O come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel, That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear.</i></p> <p>Contributor: Sarah Currier</p> <p>Marist Ministry: Principal, École Notre Dame des Victoires, San Francisco, California</p> <p>Quote Source: * Catechism of the Catholic Church #2715 **St. Louis de Montfort</p>	<p>In our roles as educators, we are called to not only impart knowledge but also to nurture the hearts and souls of our students. Advent presents us with a unique opportunity to deepen the faith of our entire school community. Mary invites us to set aside modern-day distractions such as cell phones, computers, and social media to create time and space for God. Doing so is paramount to our Catholic and Marist mission.</p> <p><i>O come, O come, Thou Lord of Might, Who to Thy tribes, on Sinai's height, In ancient times didst give the law, In cloud, and majesty, and awe.</i></p> <p>Contributor: Andy Guest</p> <p>Marist Ministry: President, Notre Dame Preparatory, Pontiac, Michigan</p> <p>Quote Source: Original quote</p>	<p>Silent nights of Advent are often disturbed by modern American expectations. “In such a surrounding full of noise, words, and messages, we can only hope to take the risk of silence, believing that out of it perhaps a ‘word’ might just be born. Not one more word among all the million others but a word of life.” *</p> <p>By bearing that Word, Mary invites me, gently, to take that risk of silence.</p> <p><i>O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free Thine own from Satan's tyranny; From depths of hell Thy people save And give them victory o'er the grave</i></p> <p>Contributor: Michael Coveny</p> <p>Marist Ministry: Marist Way Director, Marist School, Atlanta, Georgia</p> <p>Quote Source: Original quote inspired by *Francois Drouilly, <i>Fifteen Days of Prayer with Jean Claude Colin</i> (2012), p. 59.</p>	<p>Neil Diamond had a song; “They’re Coming to America.” By the tens of thousands the suffering poor arrive in El Paso Texas. Not the violent criminals or people we must fear, rather the aliens and refugees seeking and hoping for a new life. God tells his people in Exodus: “You shall not molest or oppress the alien ...or wrong the widow and orphan. With Mary, Mother of mercy, we take to our hearts these poor banished children of Eve who live in this valley of tears.</p> <p><i>O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer Our spirits by Thine advent here; Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, And death's dark shadows put to flight.</i></p> <p>Contributor: Fr. Joseph McLaughlin, SM</p> <p>Marist Ministry: Volunteer, Annunciation House, El Paso, Texas</p> <p>Quote Source: Original quote</p>	<p>“Like Elijah, the prophet, never hesitate to be still and to cherish silence. Be aware of God’s presence in the gentle breeze or the “quiet whisper” ... Mary, your sister in faith, walks with you on your spiritual journey and discretely sheds light upon all that is unfolding. Using Scripture as a source, reflect upon your life as a disciple; over time, deepen your understanding and way of living out this call.”</p> <p><i>O come, Thou Key of David, come, And open wide our heavenly home; Make safe the way that leads on high, And close the path to misery.</i></p> <p>Contributor: Nik Rodewald</p> <p>Marist Ministry: Campus Minister, Marist School, Atlanta, Georgia</p> <p>Quote Source: <i>Wherever You Go: The Marist Brothers Rule of Life</i> (2019), n. 27-28.</p>	<p>When a child receives a mother’s loving gaze, time stops and begins anew in a moment of deep thought and discernment. This is Mary’s glance toward us, an inward and all-knowing gaze drawing us closer to her son. Pause today, to receive Mary’s glance and feel her son’s presence deeply and personally active in your life.</p> <p><i>O come, Thou Wisdom from on high, And order all things, far and nigh; To us the path of knowledge show, And cause us in her ways to go.</i></p> <p>Contributor: Della Lawrence</p> <p>Marist Ministry: Interim Director of Campus Ministry, Notre Dame Preparatory, Pontiac, Michigan</p> <p>Quote Source: Original quote</p>	<p>Mary invites me into quiet contemplation during Advent through prayer. Prayer provides the privilege to be in direct communication with Almighty GOD. Prayer defies and negates all forces that might disrupt access to GOD’s infinite Grace and power. Particularly so is the power of intercessory prayer. Intercessory prayer provides an opportunity to unite with Christ on behalf of others in a way that changes the spiritual atmosphere of people, communities, and Nations. Let us pray.</p> <p><i>O come, Desire of nations, bind In one the hearts of all mankind; Bid Thou our sad divisions cease, And be Thyself our King of peace.</i></p> <p>Contributor: Aaron Hill</p> <p>Marist Ministry: Former Director of Diversity and Inclusion, Marist School, Atlanta, Georgia</p> <p>Quote Source: Original quote</p>

REJOICE, REJOICE! EMMANUEL SHALL COME TO THEE, O ISRAEL.

SUNDAY

December 24

In her first Advent, Mary was focused on Jesus and carrying the Word of God to the everyday things. In her second Advent, at Pentecost, Mary was in the middle of the Apostles and relatives, praying and uniting.

In the same way, the Virgin Mary invites us to live the Advent season praying to refocus our life in Christ, bringing the Word of God to wherever we are and creating communion around us.

*O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.*

Contributor: Fr. Daniel Fernández Alcaraz, SM

Marist Ministry: Albergue de la Santa Cruz, Sahagún, León, Spain

Quote Source: Original quote



Prayer to Mary, Woman of Listening

“Mary, woman of listening, open our ears; grant us to know how to listen to the word of your Son Jesus among the thousands of words of this world; grant that we may listen to the reality in which we live, to every person we encounter, especially those who are poor, in need, in hardship.

Mary, woman of decision, illuminate our mind and our heart, so that we may obey, unhesitating, the word of your Son Jesus; give us the courage to decide, not to let ourselves be dragged along, letting others direct our life.

Mary, woman of action, obtain that our hands and feet move “with haste” toward others, to bring them the charity and love of your Son Jesus, to bring the light of the Gospel to the world, as you did. Amen.”

~ Pope Francis in St. Peter’s Square, May 31, 2013