



ADVENT

*Who are we called to bring
Jesus to?*



National Office
for Vocation

Helping people hear God's call

A TIME OF PREPARATION

The time of preparation is here! Advent has arrived! Advent is this special time, every year in the Churches calendar, which offers us time to step back to take time to prepare ourselves for the coming of Jesus at Christmas. Imagine waking up Christmas morning without preparing for the day, no plans, no food, no gifts and then the family arrive. You would very unlikely allow this to happen, however, we often do allow this to happen when it comes to our spiritual preparation and our relationship with God. Advent draws us closer to look at our own lives and ready our hearts, it can be through prayer, reflection, forgiveness and reaching out to people who need our help. How then do we bring Jesus to others. This Advent 'Who are you called to bring Jesus to?'

Let us focus firstly on taking the theme of World Youth Day and growing this 'Mary Arose and Went with Haste' (Lk 1:39). The Blessed Virgin Mary, having received with joy the message of the archangel Gabriel, went to share this Good News with her cousin Elizabeth. What themes can we take from this?



WHO ARE WE CALLED TO BRING JESUS TO?

MARY'S 'COUSIN' ELIZABETH



In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.”

Luke 1:39-45 ESV



SHARING THE NEWS

Mary went to share her news with her cousin Elizabeth. A cousin is a family member... sometimes they can be close or quite distant, but they are a member of our family. We can sometimes feel afraid to share our joys or our fears with those closest to us. **Why? How can we change this? Why should we change this?**

There is also the point of sharing deep life moments with someone that you trust and who completely understands you – someone whom you can look back over the past with and share those moments where God has continually reached out to you.

Who is that person? Who would you really trust with talking about big decisions in life?

Mary was full of the Holy Spirit and already with the baby Jesus in her womb. She brought this presence she carried in her to her confidant. **Who are you called to bring Jesus whom you carry in your heart to?**



FROM PILGRIMAGE TO HOME

You may have been to World Youth Day or on another pilgrimage this year, but how do we take this encounter into our daily lives and develop further where God is calling us to next? There are key people in the Christmas readings who go on pilgrimage, the Shepherds and the Kings travel to meet Jesus in order to bring him to others. Here are some reflection questions for you to pray over during Advent:

How have you changed since the pilgrimage?

Was there a decision you needed to make? Have you now made this? Write down how this happened.

Write down ways you can step back this Advent and focus on where God is leading you to?

Reflect each week on each of the readings at Mass, create a journal in order to help you understand what God is communicating to you through these.

LISTENING IN ADVENT

Advent is a good time for us to step back and listen to what God wants to say to us. Mary stopped and listened when the Angel Gabriel visited her at the Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38). Sometimes God challenges us in this time, he can call us deeper into prayer, or to reconciliation through the Sacrament of Confession and also through the Scriptures.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

We may have specific questions or desires to put to God throughout this time. It is really important to listen to God's gentle guidance through various ways of listening.

Listening is a hard skill to master, we need to be disciplined and continue to develop this skill. Elijah, in the First Book of Kings learns that God can speak to us through a gentle whisper (1Kings 19:11-13).

*And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.
1 Kings 19:12-13*

*Listening is an indispensable first step in human communication, and a dimension of love.
Pope Francis*

HOW TO LISTEN

SILENCE

One of the best ways to listen to how God wants to communicate to us is in silence. Silence can be difficult when we live in a noisy world around us, however, this Advent find a space to spend some time in silence to hear God. Perhaps start with 5 minutes and let this grow.



READING

Take sometime to see how God is communicating through the Scriptures or you might also want to try and take some spiritual reading to contemplate over. Read the words and ask God to break this down and make it clear for you.



PEOPLE

God loves communicating through people, so listen to those who are around. It might be a family member or a friend, or even a priest or religious sister, listen to how God is communicating through them.



TO DISCUSS AS A GROUP

Here are some discussion points you can use as a group:

Who will you bring Jesus to this Advent?

Give each other ideas on developing prayer this Advent.

What are the qualities of a good listener?

What are your goals and aspirations for the new year?

Further help guidance contact us:

www.ukvocation.org
vocation.enquiries@cbcew.org.uk