

SPIRIT PRAYER

You are invited to use some or all of the ideas during the month of December

Scripture

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 of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord'

Luke2:9-11 NIV



Practical

Get a piece of tinsel and either carry it with you or place it somewhere you will see it. Each time you notice it ask God to keep you focused on what is important when so much is demanding your attention - your time, emotions, money and the expectations of others.

Intercessory

In this advent time pray for those who are waiting – waiting for the birth of a child, waiting for test results, waiting for their first home, waiting for an operation, waiting for love, waiting for the end of life etc.

Reflective

What is it you hope for this Advent time? Sit quietly with God and share your hopes with him until you discover the deepest one. Thank God for all he wants to give you and ask for patience to wait on his timing.

Incarnation

Imagine yourself in the role of the innkeeper or his wife in Bethlehem. The emperor has announced the census. That's not a problem, you belong here so you only need to go to the local officials and register, but others will be coming from all over the place, many will need to find a place to stay. How many will you be able to take? Can you add extra room or extra beds in the rooms you have? Maybe you could let your own room and find a corner to sleep. This is a chance too good to miss. Maybe you can have a holiday afterwards with the money you will make. Where would you like to go?

Fast forward to a week later – you are hot, tired, short-tempered. The inn has been full every night. You are at everyone's beck and call. Endless demands for food and drink. Constant noise – no breaks and now someone's banging on the door.

But when you open the door your heart goes out to the young couple standing there. The young woman is heavily pregnant, supported by her worried looking husband and even as you open your mouth to say 'Sorry no room' another contraction makes her catch her breath and you know you cannot turn them away. All you can offer is the space where the animals are but it is at least private and there is plenty of straw in the corner and they need to be off the street. As you lead them in voices clamour for your attention, for service and you leave them to it.

Later that night when most people are asleep you go and look in on the young couple. As you draw near you sense a calm, a peace, a warmth. The husband beckons you forward and you see the young mother, radiant with joy, cradling her new born baby.

You are no longer the innkeeper or his wife but yourself as you are today looking at the Christ child. What do you feel?

Rest for a moment in the presence of God incarnate – hear God's promise that this is his gift to you.

Thankful

As we celebrate the coming of Christ give thanks that he brings light into a world where there is so much darkness. Give thanks for the times he has reached into your personal darkness and led you back into the light of his presence.

