

PREPARE
YOUR
HEART

DAILY ADVENT REFLECTIONS
FROM
POPE FRANCIS



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Edited by Theresa Khoo and
Marianne Lorraine Trouvé, FSP



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WEEK 1

*Opening Our Hearts
to God*



Keep Watch

“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. . . . So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.”

—Matthew 24:42–44



[**T**his] passage of the Gospel (cf. Mt 24:37–44) introduces us to one of the most evocative themes of Advent: *the visit of the Lord to humanity*. . . .

The Word of God emphasizes the contrast between the normal unfolding of events, the everyday *routine*, and the unexpected coming of the Lord. . . . It always strikes a chord when we think about the hours which

precede a great disaster: everyone is calm, and they go about their usual business without realizing that their lives are about to be turned upside down. Of course, the Gospel does not want to scare us, but to open our horizons to *another*, greater dimension, one which, on the one hand, puts into perspective everyday things, while at the same time making them precious, crucial. The relationship with the God-who-comes-to-visit-us gives every gesture, every thing, a different light, a substance, a symbolic value.

Angelus, November 27, 2016

REFLECTION

How am I awake or asleep to the events happening in my life?

PRAYER

Jesus, help me to be alert so that I won't miss the signs of your presence in my life.



Stay Vigilant

But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into.

—Matthew 24:43



There also comes an invitation to *sobriety*, to not be controlled by the things of this world, by material reality, but rather to govern them. If, by contrast, we allow ourselves to be influenced and overpowered by these things, we cannot perceive that there is something very important: our final encounter with the Lord. . . . And everyday matters must have this horizon, and must

be directed to that horizon—this encounter with the Lord who comes for us. In that moment, as the Gospel says, “Then two men will be in the field; one is taken and one is left” (Mt 24:40). It is an invitation to be vigilant, because in not knowing when he will come, we need to be ever ready to leave.

Angelus, November 27, 2016

REFLECTION

What am I watchful and waiting for right now?

PRAYER

Sometimes, Lord, my life seems so ordinary. But I believe that you are at work even in the small things that happen each day. Open my eyes that I may see your gentle, loving Providence that guides me to you.



Let God Change Your Life

By the tender mercy of our God,
the dawn from on high will break upon us.

—Luke 1:78



In [the] season of Advent, we are called to expand the horizons of our hearts, to be amazed by the life which presents itself each day with newness. In order to do this, we must learn to not depend on our own certainties, on our own established strategies, because the Lord comes at a time that we do not imagine. He comes to bring us into a more beautiful and grand dimension.

May Our Lady, the Virgin of Advent, help us not to consider ourselves proprietors of our life, not to resist

when the Lord comes to change it, but to be ready to let ourselves be visited by him, the awaited and welcome guest, even if it disturbs our plans.

Angelus, November 27, 2016

REFLECTION

How do I deal with surprises or setbacks in my life?

PRAYER

Teach me, Lord, to turn to you with trust each day.