

POCKET PRAYERS FROM

*Living***Faith**

ADVENT

Creative
Communications
Sample

The background of the entire page is a photograph of four lit purple candles. The candles are arranged in a row, with the second one from the left being the tallest. They are surrounded by festive decorations, including green pine branches, silver ornaments, and a white star. The background is a dark blue with bokeh light effects.

INTRODUCTION

The idea of parallel universes is popular in science fiction, but in the month before Christmas, they can seem all too real for many Christians. We straddle two universes: one of shopping, parties, decorating and cooking, the other one in which we long to savor the real reason for the season. This is why we need Advent so much! Our Advent traditions help us bridge these conflicting worlds. They help us express what is deepest in our hearts—that we are children of a loving Father waiting for our Savior to be born and come into our hearts. This little booklet, along with a few of the many prayers and traditions of the Advent season, can help. Although you don't need anything additional to accompany this booklet, it's nice to have some candles to light, whether part of an Advent wreath or not. Spend some time anticipating Christ's arrival. Discover the very real joy, peace, love and hope that await you.

—Connie Clark

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light.

Isaiah 9:1

Lord God, in these early days of the season, I think of an Advent wreath with its one glowing candle. One lonely votive cannot light my entire house, certainly, but it brings light and a bit of warmth to a little circle of darkness. I am like this one candle, Lord. I am one person, this is one day in my life. I can't do everything. But today, I can share light and warmth with the people in this circle where you have placed me. Little by little, week by week, help my light grow in the darkness. Help me remember the one true light—one child, born to defeat the darkness of sin and ignorance forever—the Light of the World. Stand with me, Jesus. Help me shine your light today, tomorrow and always.

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

Matthew 7:7

The St. Andrew Christmas Novena is a traditional Advent prayer (below). Unlike most novenas that are nine days long, it is recited 15 times a day, from the feast of St. Andrew on November 30 until Christmas. Don't worry if you got a late start. Begin any time. Give yourself a few minutes each day to reflect on this most extraordinary "hour and moment" and what it means to you.

"Hail and blessed be the hour and moment in which the Son of God was born of the most pure Virgin Mary, at midnight, in Bethlehem, in the piercing cold. In that hour vouchsafe, I beseech thee, O my God, to hear my prayer and grant my desires through the merits of our savior Jesus Christ, and of his blessed Mother. *(You can include an intention here if you want.)*
Amen."

Lift up your eyes on high
and see who has created these...
They that hope in the LORD will renew their strength,
they will soar as with eagles' wings.

Isaiah 40:26, 31

The December sky is full of wonder. Around midmonth, the Geminid meteor shower festoons the heavenly night with shooting stars. Not to be outdone, daytime offers its own splendors; we get bracingly cold days when the sky is so brilliant we need to invent a new word because “blue” can’t describe it fully. Yet sometimes, December weather wears us down so much that we can barely lift up our eyes. Still, we join wise men and shepherds this month, searching the sky. We may not be sure what we’re looking for. Yet the heavens invite us to contemplate the One who created it all, the One who loves us with so much tenderness that he became one of us. We are his children, and we anticipate the day when we will soar to his heavenly kingdom on the wings of eagles.

We are not the sum of our weaknesses and failures; we are the sum of the Father's love for us.

Pope St. John Paul II

Lord God, it is easy to be overwhelmed right now. I look at the gifts I need to buy and the gifts that I forgot I had already bought. I look at the stores bulging with merchandise, the mall parking lots jammed with cars, the employees working overtime. Help me remember that at the heart of all this is the greatest gift of all: your son. When it comes down to it, we are simply trying our best to imitate you and your giving love. Help me keep this in mind in all of my giving this year. Help me find ways to give of myself. Help me make time to share the love you have given me. I will light two candles as a reminder that you call me to love others as you love me.



I am Gabriel, who stand before God. I was sent to speak to you and to announce to you this good news.

Luke 1:19

As my car inched forward on the rain-soaked highway that was clogged with mud and debris, I noticed a prison bus on the side of the road. Workers in bright orange vests labored through the downpour, clearing the mud just a few feet from my car. Instinctively, I checked the car door locks, just as one of the men turned and looked straight at me, right through my streaming windshield. He smiled. It wasn't the smile of a criminal, a con artist or a prisoner burdened with heavy manual labor. It was the brilliant, honest, welcoming smile of a young man who appeared to be saying, "I was sent here to help get you to your destination. Be safe." Angels can show up in the most unexpected places. What angels will be sent to you today? How will you respond?

Keep the hope and joy of Advent with you all season long with this newest *Pocket Prayers From Living Faith*. Chock full of Scripture, original prayers and reflections, this little booklet can serve as a giant help for those who want a more prayerful and meaningful Advent experience.



This book, along with many other Creative Communications for the Parish products, is available on **amazonkindle** and **nook**
by Barnes & Noble

By Connie Clark. Design by Jamie Wyatt. Cover image: Shutterstock. © 2017 Creative Communications for the Parish, a Division of Bayard, Inc., 1564 Fencorp Dr., Fenton, MO 63026. 800-325-9414. www.creativecommunications.com. All rights reserved. Printed in the USA. **LFP7**