

Christ Is *the* Heart *of* Christmas

Devotions for Advent

Creative
Communications
Sample



Arden W. Mead

In Commemoration

We are happy to reissue *Christ Is the Heart of Christmas* for you in honor of this 40th anniversary of Creative Communications for the Parish, established in 1977. This was the first Advent devotional booklet our company published. Rather than being a daily devotional, this was designed to be a topical one. Devotions are to be read as (or before, or after) you are engaging in one of the countless activities this active season brings. This approach was important (even exciting) for the author, Arden W. Mead—a man for whom the saying, “Christ is all, and in all,” was most certainly true. Arden truly saw (and truly *found*) his saving Lord in the many and mundane activities leading up to Christmas. We are certain his hope was that you might see your Lord, too.

—Your friends at Creative Communications

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Introduction

“And it came to pass in those days ...”

The days before Christmas can be very busy ones, filled with all kinds of “traditions” that are part of your holiday preparation—things like putting up a tree, decorating the house, sending greetings and getting them, baking cookies, shopping and choosing and wrapping ...

This booklet does not intend to add to that activity or offer additional things to do—you’re busy enough already.

Strictly speaking, it is not a daily devotional. You will notice that the items are not dated by the calendar or offered in any specific order.

Instead, this booklet offers things to ponder (and pray about) **while you do the things you would be doing anyway**, so that as many holiday activities as possible keep reminding you what the season is really all about.

Right now, read through the Table of Contents to discover the kinds of resources this book offers. Day by day you may want to check off those you have used during the holiday season.

PRAY TODAY that the love of Christ may fill your heart.

When Candles Glow

“... and the glory of the Lord shone round about them.”

In many homes the **Advent wreath** is a Christmas custom. This table-top arrangement uses four candles as a worship center. One candle is lit at devotion time on the First Sunday in Advent and each day that week. A second candle is added on the Second Sunday in Advent for that week ... and so on until all four are glowing as Christmas draws near.

Whether or not you use the wreath, candles at holiday time can be a reminder that Jesus is “the Light of the world,” dispelling the darkness of our sin and death with the warm glow of his forgiving love.

Since many candles are made of **beeswax**, they can also remind us that even when we are “as busy as bees” (as we often are this time of year!), like bees we are working together toward a common goal: to celebrate Christ as the heart of Christmas.

When you light candles this season, say out loud, “Jesus is the Light of the world.”

PRAY TODAY that the light of his love may shine in you ... and through you ... to the glory of God.

When Bells Ring

“... glorifying and praising God ...”

Bells make a happy sound. Maybe that is why there are so many of them at Christmas, showing up as tree ornaments and on greeting cards. How many different kinds of bells confront you this season?

Jingle bells (like those on “a one-horse open sleigh”) let us know that someone is coming ... and Advent tells us who it is. Jesus is coming!

Doorbells announce that someone is *here*, repeating that Advent message in a way that is up close and personal.

Church bells ring out loudly to proclaim the same thing, inviting us to hear the good news that God loved the world so much that he sent Jesus to be our Savior, Christ the Lord.

Hand bells are rung at shopping centers by folks collecting money for poor people, who will certainly be happy that those bells rang.

When you hear bells this season, lift up your head and say (or at least think), “Here comes Jesus!”

PRAY TODAY for people who cannot hear ... and for those who live with other disabilities.

When You Receive Your First Christmas Card

“... there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus ...”

The first Christmas card of the season always comes as kind of a surprise, doesn't it? “How can anyone be that organized?”

It's good to hear from people again, especially those whose only contact seems to be at this time of year. The first Christmas card is a reminder that **the season really is upon us**; Christmas is truly on the way!

The “greetings” sent by Caesar Augustus probably came as a surprise to Mary and Joseph. Perhaps they were not as happy as we are to hear from someone so far away. But in Caesar's decree we can see that **God** was truly “organized” in his divine preparations for the first Christmas.

And so we can be assured that in all the activities of nations and their rulers God continues to work out his good pleasure for us, according to God's loving plan.

Christmas cards are a special way of being told that “Christ is the Heart of Christmas.” As they continue to arrive, make note of those that you think do the best job of sharing God's Good News with you ... and, if possible, display them for all to see.

PRAY TODAY for governments and rulers, that through them the peace of the Lord may be evident in our world.

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In honor of the 40th anniversary of Creative Communications, we proudly reissue our very first Advent devotion, *Christ Is the Heart of Christmas*. Still as relevant today, this booklet by Arden W. Mead takes a look at the many activities we engage in this hectic season, and puts Christ where he belongs: at the heart of each of them. This “topical” devotional encourages the reading of the devotions during the activities they represent—truly drawing awareness of this season’s true reason into all we do.



This book, along with many other Creative Communications for the Parish products, is available on **amazon**kindle and **nook**.