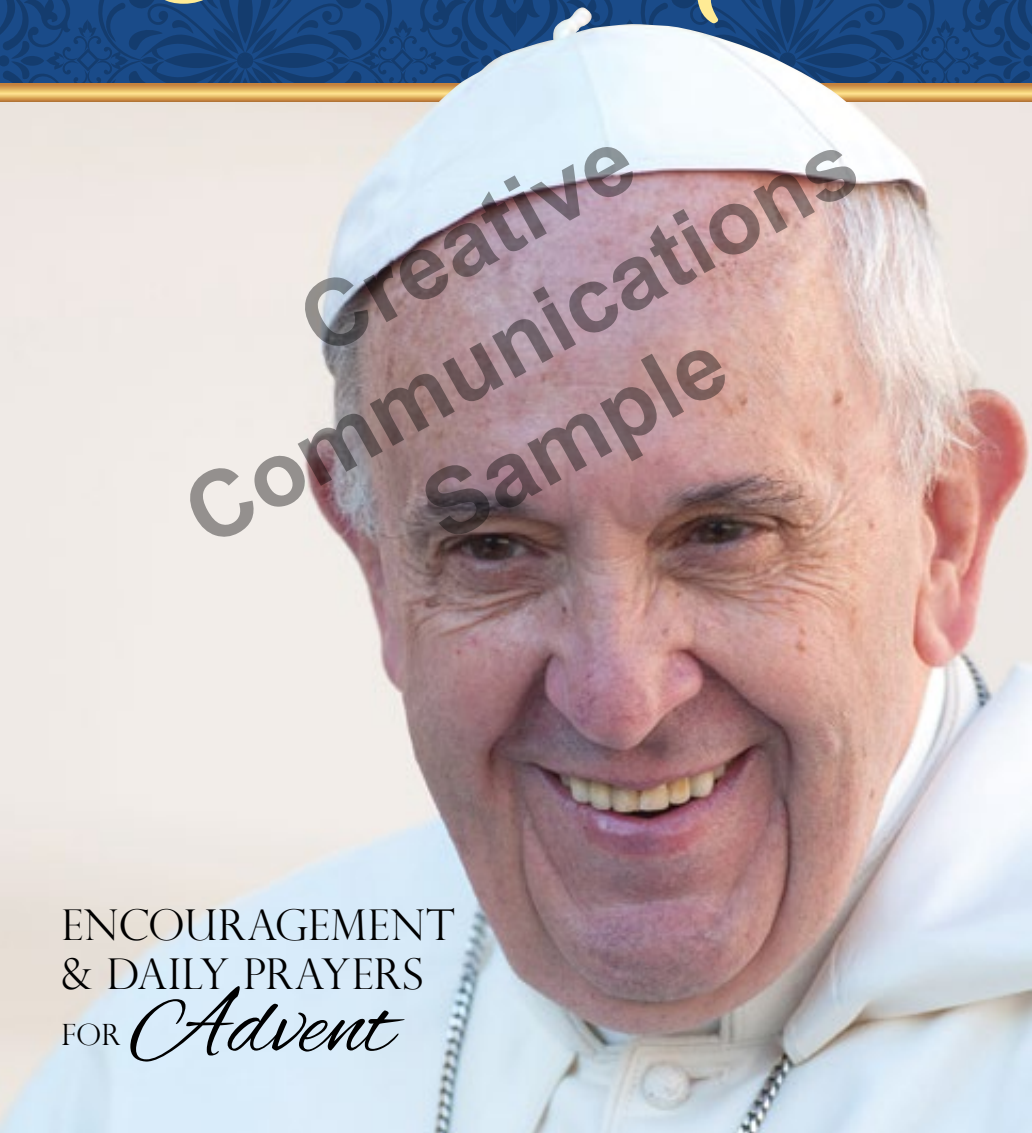


P O P E F R A N C I S

In the
Light of *Hope*

Creative
Communications
Sample

ENCOURAGEMENT
& DAILY PRAYERS
FOR *Advent*



Creative Communications Sample

Introduction

Hope, for all its positive attributes, is actually just the opposite of despair. We hope because we want something better. So in writing these prayers, inspired by the words of the Holy Father, I was not surprised how often I began in a place of doubt, hurt or confusion. For only in such places can we make our way into the light of hope.

That's the point of our faith. Like the ancient Israelites wandering in the desert, we are a people lost in darkness and searching for a new life. We try to get by on our own devices, but we cannot, no matter how hard we try. So we admit that we need our all-loving God. We recognize the saving grace bestowed upon us by the sacrifice of Jesus, our savior. And we joyfully prepare for his coming during this special season of Advent.

Our journey as Christians is a journey of transformation. And the only way to get where we want to go is to know where we begin. We begin in darkness. But there is a light straight ahead. The Light of the World provides us with the "Light of Hope," and there is a hand to hold that will lead us into it.

Steve Givens

FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

God Is Love

In this way the love of God was revealed to us: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might have life through him.

1 John 4:9

FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

It is the wonder of Christmas, for which we are preparing, with hope, in this Season of Advent. It is the surprise of a Child God, of a poor God, of a weak God, of a God who abandons his greatness to come close to each one of us.

WEEKLY GENERAL AUDIENCE, DECEMBER 14, 2016

God of all my days, I often find that it's much easier for me to shut out the surprises you might have for me than it is to open myself up to the possibility of disappointment. I know this, and yet I ask for something else this Advent season. I ask for the confidence to awake each day and ask, "What do you have for me today, Lord?" You abandoned all and gave all so that I might live in joy. Now I need to believe that joy is possible for me. Be my surprise. Open me up to your love. Amen.

READ JOHN 10:10

MONDAY

FIRST WEEK IN ADVENT

Evil will not triumph forever; there is an end to suffering...How bad is it when we find a Christian who has lost hope! “But, I don’t hope in anything; everything is finished for me.”

WEEKLY GENERAL AUDIENCE, DECEMBER 14, 2016

God of my triumph, I know there are those around me who have lost hope, those for whom the Advent and Christmas seasons are not filled with joy. Help me to recognize their pain and be a sign of joy for them without discounting what they are going through. Allow me to be a point of light for them without dismissing their darkness. Through my patience, kindness and love, may they experience, even if it is just an inkling, your love for them. Never let me forget, I pray, that I may be the only Christ they see this season. Amen.

READ ISAIAH 9:2

TUESDAY

FIRST WEEK IN ADVENT

When we are a little sad, when everything seems to go awry, when a boy or girl friend disappoints us—or, also, we disappoint ourselves!—let us think: “God loves me”; ‘God doesn’t abandon me.’”

*ADDRESS TO YOUTH FROM ITALIAN CATHOLIC ACTION,
DECEMBER 19, 2016*

God of both my ups and downs, I tend to thank you when everything is going well. I like to think of you as the God of my abundance, my Lord of every good thing and every blessing. And you certainly are. But perhaps more importantly, you are the God of my poverty, my Lord in the moments of my greatest sadness and loneliness. Help me to remember this, Lord. When the pressures of this season attempt to drag me down, allow me to feel your love and grace. Hide me in the shadow of your wing. Amen.

READ 1 JOHN 4:16

POPE FRANCIS

*In the
Light of Hope*



Pope Francis has hope. And he shares it with readers in his own words as he lovingly urges us to “be open to the surprise of a God-child.” He lights the way for the faithful who are working to transform their lives, especially in this Advent season. Long-time *Living Faith* author Steve Givens offers readers his prayerful perspective on the pontiff’s words, expressing his belief that we all have saving grace available to us. “We begin in darkness,” Steve writes. “But there is a light straight ahead.” In beginning this Advent *In the Light of Hope*, you will be preparing yourself for even greater Christmas joy.

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This book, along with many other Creative Communications for the Parish products, is available on [amazonkindle](#) and [nook](#)

By Steve Givens. Design by Jamie Wyatt. Cover image: Fabio PIGNATA/PPP/CIRIC
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