

Daily Disciplines

Devotion:

Not everyone can wait: neither the sated nor the satisfied nor those without respect can wait. The only ones who can wait are people who carry restlessness around with them and people look up with reverence to the greatest in the world. Thus, Advent can be celebrated only by those whose souls give them no peace, who know that they are poor and incomplete, and who sense something of the greatness that is supposed to come, before which they can only bow in humble timidity, waiting until he inclines himself toward us – the Holy One himself, God in the child in the manger. God is coming; the Lord Jesus is coming; Christmas is coming. Rejoice, O Christendom!

--Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Journal Prompt:

As Advent comes to a close, reflect on what this season has meant to you as you prepare for the celebration of the birth of the Christ child.

Prayer Prompt:

Prayerfully reflect on the stanzas from the Advent hymn, *O Lord, How Shall I Meet You*

O Lord, how shall I meet you, how welcome you aright?

Your people long to greet you, my hope, my heart's delight!

O kindle, Lord most holy, a lamp within my breast.

To do in spirit lowly all that may please you best.

Love caused your incarnation; love brought you down to me;

Your thirst for my salvation procured my liberty.

O love beyond all telling, that led you to embrace

In love, all loves excelling, our lost and fallen race.

You come, O Lord, with gladness, in mercy and goodwill,

To bring an end to sadness and bid our fears be still.

In patient expectation we live for that great day

When your renewed creation your glory shall display.

--Paul Gerhardt, trans. Catherine Winkworth ((Glory to God, Presbyterian Hymnal)

Lectio Divina:

Practice lectio divina using:

Is it all sewn up - my life?

Is it at this point so predictable,

so orderly,

so arranged,

so right,

that I don't have time or space

for listening to the rustle of angels' wings
or running to stables to see a baby?
Could this be what he meant when he said
Listen, those who have ears to hear....
Look, those who have eyes to see?
O God, give me the humbleness of those shepherds
who saw in the cold December darkness
the Coming of Light
the Advent of Love!

--Ann Weems, *Kneeling in Bethlehem*