

Advent

A Season of Expectation

We are now firmly in the season of Advent and a time of spiritual preparation. Each week we light a different candle and this week we lit the candle representing the prophets who foretold the coming of a saviour. In our Gospel reading (Luke 3: 1-6), we learned that “the word of God came to John, son of Zechariah, in the wilderness.” (Luke 3:2) John the Baptist was the last prophet, preparing the coming of Jesus by “preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.” (Luke 3:3) This ministry of John was foretold many centuries before by the prophet Isaiah (Luke 3: 4-6; see also Isaiah 40: 3-6)

How are you preparing yourself in this season of Advent? How do you make room for God in the busyness of your life?

Brother Lawrence, a 17th-century Carmelite monk, has much to say to us as we try to live a spiritual life in a busy, modern world. For five decades, he quietly pioneered a new way of life, a way of blending daily work with an ongoing conversation with God. One way we can develop an ongoing conversation with God is by saying thank you to Him throughout the day.

Paul, in our second reading (Philippians 1: 3-11), says “I thank my God every time I ...”

Thinking through your day and your week, what are the things you can be thankful for?

Are there good things that pop into your day regularly that you can thank God for? What are they?

Brother Lawrence encourages us to recognize that God is already present where we are. All our activities during the day, however menial they might appear to us, are an occasion for God to accomplish his good purposes for us and his world. Paul writes ““Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion . . . whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel” (Phil. 3: 6-7). God is working out his purposes right now, where we are, in what we do.

Have you ever considered inviting God into your workplace, your daily activities, your household activities, involving Him in the actual work you’re doing? What would it look like? How would it work?

Think through your full day: *Are there other times that would make for good triggers as reminders to chat with God? What would they be? What would you say?*

Finally, in the opening pages of his book “*Practicing the presence of God,*” Brother Lawrence reveals that our driving pursuit ought to be a resolute love for God. In our passage, Paul writes: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight (Philippians 1: 9)

Reflect on the following quote from Brother Lawrence: “*We ought not to be weary of doing little things for the love of God, who regards not the greatness of the work, but the love with which it is performed.*”

Here is how Brother Lawrence prayed to invite God in his kitchen “duties”

Lord of all pots and pans and things, since I've no time to be a great saint by doing lovely things...

Make me a saint by getting meals and washing up the plates. Warm all the kitchen with Thy Love and light it with Thy peace; forgive me all my worrying and make my grumbling cease. Thou who didst love to give men food, in room, or by the sea, accept the service that I do, I do it unto Thee. Amen.

You may want to visit this web page

<https://www.bible.com/en-GB/reading-plans/10497-practicing-the-presence-of-god-old-habits-new-year/day/1>

