



Opening Prayer ~ Advent Season

Appropriate for Board, Staff and Faculty Meetings

Introduction

This evening we come together virtually in the midst of the Advent season awaiting the coming of the Lord at Christmas. Symbols of waiting appear in our churches, in our homes and in our schools. An empty crib filled with fresh straw awaiting the arrival of the Christ Child is a wonderful way to remind us that this is a season of preparation. The crib reminds us daily to prepare our hearts for his coming through acts of love, charity and service.

St. Alphonsus Liguori, Doctor of the Church and special patron of the IHM Congregation, embraced a four-pronged spirituality on the themes of Crib, Cross, Blessed Sacrament, and Mother of God. The Incarnation for St. Alphonsus, represented by the Crib, was the revelation of the true face of God and a sign of God's unconditional love for each one of us. Jesus, the Word-made-flesh, embraced human life in its entirety so that we might share in His Divinity.

Reading: Revelation 21:3

A reading from the book of Revelation

I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, God's dwelling is with the human race. He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will always be with them [as their God]."

Litany of Invitation to the Lord Who Comes

Let us pause and invite God to come and be with us in the midst of this pandemic. Let us hold before him the many people who are suffering from sickness, loss of loved ones, unemployment and anxiety. Please respond, Come, Lord Jesus.

Response: Come, Lord Jesus.

Come with **wisdom**, Lord Jesus:

Come to rulers of nations and all decision makers.

Come with wisdom that enlightens and gives insight, we pray...

Come with **peace**, Lord Jesus:

Come to our families, our friends and our community.

Come with peace to all of us, we pray...

Come with **hope**, Lord Jesus:

Come to the depressed, the unemployed, those suffering from the coronavirus in our world.

Come with hope that brings light into the darkness, we pray...

Come with **love**, Lord Jesus:

Come to the lonely, the anxious, the homeless,
Come with love into our homes and hearts, we pray...

Come with **faith**, Lord Jesus:

Come to those filled with doubts and deep concerns.

Come with faith that enables them to believe that all will be well, we pray...

Come with **fortitude**, Lord Jesus:

Come to the oppressed and the frightened.

Come with fortitude to strengthen and comfort, we pray...

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, you are the peace that binds the human race in one. As we prepare to celebrate with joy the feast of your birth, renew in all hearts the love of God and neighbor that is the true sign of your Kingdom among us, who live and reign with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen