



*Serving the Spiritual Needs of Grieving Parents  
Whose Children of Any Age Have Died by Any Cause,  
No Matter How Long Ago*

**Your Emmaus Ministry  
Remote Retreat Guide  
December 19, 2020  
9:30am ET  
(or a convenient time for you)**

**ADVENT  
WEEK FOUR**

**Pause, Ponder, Pray**



**Preparation:**

Ahead of time, we recommend you find a quiet place in your home where you can immerse yourself in this retreat. Have your child's Emmaus Memorial Candle (or other candle) available along with a lighter or matches.

Take several deep breaths to cleanse your thoughts and open yourself to wherever the Holy Spirit is calling you today several minutes before the retreat is scheduled to begin.

At 9:30am ET open your email and join other fellow Emmaus Parent Companions in getting away from the rest of the world, at least for a time, to focus on God and on your precious child.

**CANDLE LIGHTING PRAYER** (Light your candle)

We begin... In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen

Lord, you are the Light of the World. *Help us feel your presence in the lighting of this candle.*

Lord, you gave us the gift of our children. *Help us feel their presence in the lighting of this candle.*

Lord, you gave us the hope of eternal life. *Help us confirm that hope in the lighting of this candle.*

Lord, you gave us love. *Help us to know that, as much as we love our children, you love them even more.*

We ask you this through Christ, Our Lord  
Amen.

**OPENING SONG:** [Each Winter As the Year Grows Older](#) by MaryRuth  
*I believe beyond believing that life can spring from death, that growth can flower from our grieving, that we can catch our breath and turn transfixed by faith.*

**PRAYER OF THOSE MAKING A RETREAT**

Loving Spirit of Wisdom,

Guide my thoughts and my memories.

In the light of your love,  
May I see what is important for me to remember,  
What is important for me to hold to my heart,  
And what I need to simply let go of in peace.

I trust you to be my guide,  
Even when the path seems unclear to me.

We pray this in the name of Your Son, the Healer,  
Our Lord, Jesus Christ.  
Amen.

## **SCRIPTURE READING**

### **Luke 1:26-38**

The Angel Gabriel was sent from God  
to a town of Galilee called Nazareth,  
to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph,  
of the house of David,  
and the virgin's name was Mary.

And coming to her, he said,  
"Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you."  
But she was greatly troubled at what was said  
and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.

Then the angel said to her,  
"Do not be afraid, Mary,  
for you have found favor with God.  
"Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son,  
and you shall name him Jesus.

He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High,  
and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father,  
and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever,  
and of his kingdom there will be no end."

But Mary said to the angel,  
"How can this be,  
since I have no relations with a man?"

And the angel said to her in reply,  
"The Holy Spirit will come upon you,  
and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.

Therefore the child to be born  
will be called holy, the Son of God.

And behold, Elizabeth, your relative,  
has also conceived a son in her old age,  
and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren;  
for nothing will be impossible for God."

Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord.  
May it be done to me according to your word."

Then the angel departed from her.

The Gospel of the Lord  
Praise be to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

**REFLECTION #1: [The Fourth Sunday of Advent](#)** by Jeff Clavins  
*Christmas is about being adopted... about being pursued by God and overcome by His love.*



Take a moment to pause... breathe... Reflect on what you have received from the Reflection #1.

Clear your mind before focusing on Reflection #2.

**REFLECTION #2: [Advent Reflection](#)** by Fr. James Schwartz  
*What can we learn from all of this waiting in 2020?*

### **PRAYER**

Father, All-Powerful God,

Your Eternal Word took flesh on our earth  
when the Virgin Mary placed her life at the service of your plan.

Lift our minds in watchful hope to hear the voice which announces his glory,

And open our minds to receive the Spirit who prepares us for his coming.

We ask you this through Christ Our Lord.

Amen.

**CLOSING HYMN: [My Soul in Stillness Waits](#)** performed by Chris Cantu  
*Truly my hope is in You.*

### **CLOSING BLESSING**

Let us end our time of retreat...united with Brother John Maganzini, OFM and the Franciscan Friars at Saint Anthony Shrine in Boston, MA, by blessing one another.

Bow your head, raise your right hand as, together, we pray...

In this brief moment of quiet, may we truly appreciate the miracle of the Christ Child

May we be bursting with joy for the coming feast of Christmas.

May we hope in the promise of His way, His truth, and His life.

May we join with the angels who sing His praises.

May He grant us the lasting peace of this season of joy.

We pray this as we bless each other in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.



**FOR FURTHER REFLECTION:**

**[Come to Us Advent Song](#)** by Greg Walton  
*Come to us, O Child of Gory, and make us anew.*

**[Choosing Darkness](#)** by Fr. Michael Sparough, SJ  
*What is it in us that resists the light of God's love and instead clings to darkness?*

**[Fourth Sunday of Advent Two Minute Homily](#)** by Fr. Mauro Conte  
*Do not be afraid.*



You will receive a new Emmaus Remote Retreat email next Friday.

Please join your fellow  
Emmaus Parent Companions  
again next Saturday at 9:30am ET

Until then, may God bless you and keep you.  
Sending many warm, virtual hugs

For past Remote Retreats, see [here](#).



