

## A Monastic Mass in the Spirit of Advent

### Musical Offering (Cantor):

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel / O ven, O ven Emanuel"  
[text: anon. 12th c.; tune: Veni, veni emmanuel]

### The Lighting of Candles (Acolyte lights sanctuary candles)

#### Celebrant:

Almighty God, we give you thanks for surrounding us,  
as daylight fades, with the brightness of the vesper light;  
and we implore you of your great mercy that,  
as you enfold us with the radiance of this light,  
so you would shine into our hearts  
the brightness of your Holy Spirit;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Cantor:** sings the Phos Hilaron

The **Phos Hilaron** is the earliest known Christian hymn recorded outside of the scriptures that is still being used today and is generally sung during the lighting of lamps or candles.

O Radiant Light,  
O Holy Glory of God  
the immortal blessed Father in heaven,  
O Christ Jesus!  
Now as the sunset comes upon us  
and we see the evening lights,  
we praise God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit!  
It is right at all times to sing your praise  
with all the universe,  
O Son of God:  
You are the life of the world.

## The Lighting of the Incense

### Psalm 141

**Cantor:** Like incense, may our prayers rise before you O God,  
the lifting of our hands like an evening oblation. (Ps  
141.2)

**All:** Like incense, may our prayers rise before you O God,  
the lifting of our hands like an evening oblation.

**Cantor:** O LORD, I call to you; come quickly to me.  
Hear my voice when I call to you. (v.1)

Like incense, may my prayer rise before you O God,  
the lifting of my hands like an evening oblation. (v. 2)

But my eyes are fixed on you, O Sovereign LORD;  
in you I take refuge. (v.8)

**All:** Like incense, may our prayers rise before you O God,  
the lifting of our hands like an evening oblation.

## The Spirit of Advent

The word advent is derived from the Latin *adventus*, which means "coming" or "arrival" and serves as a dual reminder of the original waiting for the birth of Christ and for the second coming of Christ.

### Narrator:

The Season of Advent begins next weekend. It is a time set aside for deep spiritual reflection. Marked by a spirit of expectation and hope, the four weeks leading up to the celebration of Christmas call Christians to focus on the birth of our Savior.

## The Blessing of the Advent Season

**Celebrant:**

O God, by whose word all things are sanctified, pour forth your blessing upon this season and help us use it as a means of deep spiritual reflection and as a means to nurture a spirit of expectation and hope leading up to the celebration of Christmas. Amen.

**Narrator:**

We are an Advent people—a people who live in the eternal hope and expectation of the ever burning light of the Risen One. Let us reflect on some of the Old Testament prophecies that were fulfilled with the coming birth of Christ. You are invited to read one of the passages of scripture.

**Reader 1:**

A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;  
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.  
The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—  
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,  
the Spirit of counsel and of power,  
the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD -  
and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.  
He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,  
or decide by what he hears with his ears;  
but with righteousness he will judge the needy,  
with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.  
He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;  
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.  
Righteousness will be his belt  
and faithfulness the sash around his waist.  
The wolf will live with the lamb,  
the leopard will lie down with the goat,  
the calf and the lion and the yearling together;  
and a little child will lead them.

The cow will feed with the bear,  
their young will lie down together,  
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.  
The infant will play near the hole of the cobra,  
and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest.  
They will neither harm nor destroy  
on all my holy mountain,  
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD  
as the waters cover the sea.  
In that day the Root of Jesse  
will stand as a banner for the peoples;  
the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious.  
(Isa 11. 1-10)

**Cantor:** Be patient until the coming of the Lord;  
and strengthen your hearts,  
for the coming of the Lord is near. (James 5. 7-8)

**Reader 2:**

" 'The days are coming,' declares the LORD,  
'when I will fulfill the gracious promise I made  
to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. "  
'In those days and at that time  
I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David's line;  
he will do what is just and right in the land.  
In those days Judah will be saved  
and Jerusalem will live in safety.  
This is the name by which it will be called:  
The LORD Our Righteousness.'  
(Jer 33. 14-16)

**Cantor:** Be patient until the coming of the Lord;  
and strengthen your hearts,  
for the coming of the Lord is near. (James 5. 7-8)

**Reader 3:**

"But you, Bethlehem,  
though you are small among the clans of Judah,

out of you will come for me  
one who will be ruler over Israel,  
whose origins are from of old,  
from ancient times."

Therefore Israel will be abandoned  
until the time when she who is in labor gives birth  
and the rest of his brothers return  
to join the Israelites.

He will stand and shepherd his flock  
in the strength of the LORD,  
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.  
And they will live securely, for then his greatness  
will reach to the ends of the earth.

And he will be their peace.

(Micah 5. 1-5)

**Cantor:** Be patient until the coming of the Lord;  
and strengthen your hearts,  
for the coming of the Lord is near. (James 5. 7-8)

**Reader 4:**

The people who walk in darkness  
Will see a great light;  
Those who live in a dark land,  
The light will shine on them.  
You shall multiply the nation,  
You shall increase their gladness;  
They will be glad in Your presence  
As with the gladness of harvest,  
As men rejoice when they divide the spoil.  
For You shall break the yoke of their burden  
and the staff on their shoulders,

For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us;  
And the government will rest on His shoulders;  
And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor,  
Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.  
There will be no end to the increase

of His government or of peace,  
On the throne of David and over his kingdom,  
To establish it and to uphold it with justice  
and righteousness  
From then on and forevermore  
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.  
(Isa 9. 4; 6-7)

**Cantor:** Be patient until the coming of the Lord;  
and strengthen your hearts,  
for the coming of the Lord is near. (James 5. 7-8)

**Narrator:**

Let us reflect on some of the New Testament events that occurred during the months prior to the birth of Christ. You are invited to read one of the passages of scripture.

**Reader 5:**

In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."

"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to

be barren is in her sixth month. For nothing is impossible with God." "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said." Then the angel left her.

(Luke 1. 26-38)

**Cantor:** Be patient until the coming of the Lord;  
and strengthen your hearts,  
for the coming of the Lord is near. (James 5. 7-8)

**Reader 6:**

At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished!"(Luke 1. 39-45)

**Cantor:** Be patient until the coming of the Lord;  
and strengthen your hearts,  
for the coming of the Lord is near. (James 5. 7-8)

**Reader 7:**

an angel of the Lord appeared to (Joseph)  
in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David,  
do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife,  
because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.  
She will give birth to a son,  
and you are to give him the name Jesus,  
because he will save his people from their sins."  
All this took place to fulfill what the Lord  
had said through the prophet: "The virgin will be with child  
and will give birth to a son,

and they will call him Immanuel"  
—which means, "God with us."  
(Math 1. 20-22)

**Cantor:** Be patient until the coming of the Lord;  
and strengthen your hearts,  
for the coming of the Lord is near. (James 5. 7-8)

**Celebrant:** Let us pray:

**All:**

In the past, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets  
at many times and in various ways,  
but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son,  
whom he appointed heir of all things,  
and through whom he made the universe.  
The Son is the reflection of God's glory  
and the exact representation of his being,  
sustaining all things by his powerful word.  
(Hebrews 1. 1-3)

**Celebrant:**

We are an Advent People and  
we will carry the meaning of these scriptures,  
into the Christmas Season  
So that we may find ourselves joyfully ready  
to receive the Christ Child,  
the light to all nations, the Word made flesh,  
and who lives and reigns with us forever and ever—Amen.

**Cantor:** sings once before everyone joins in the meditation  
(Ps 27.14)

Wait for the Lord,  
Whose day is near.  
Wait for the Lord:  
keep watch, take heart.

**A period of reflective silence follows**

## Centering Prayer

The roots of centering prayer are in the contemplative prayers of the Desert Fathers and Mothers.

### **Narrator:** The Practice of Centering Prayer

Centering prayer is a popular method of silent contemplative prayer that places a strong emphasis on interior silence. Guidelines for centering prayer have evolved and focus on four primary activities that you are now encouraged to practice. While centering prayer is encouraged to be a spiritual practice of more than just a few minutes at a time, let us take a few minutes to practice this ancient spiritual tradition.

1. Sit comfortably with your eyes closed, relax, and quiet yourself;
2. Choose and focus on one of the names given to Christ that we are reminded of during the Advent season—Immanuel, Wonderful Counselor, Prince of Peace, Son of God, Jesus—your sacred word could also be a spiritual state or condition such as silence, stillness, peace, calm, or patience;
3. Let your sacred words or word be gently present as your symbol of your desire to be in God’s presence and open to God’s presence within you;
4. Whenever you become aware of anything (thoughts, noise, feelings, perceptions, images, etc.) do not engage them and simply return to your sacred word.

### **A brief period of reflective silence follows**

### **Lectio Divina: A Dialogue with God**

### **Celebrant:**

The practice of Lectio Divina (Sacred Reading) includes dialoguing with God in prayer by hearing scripture as God speaking and

responding in similar thoughts and words to what God said. Let us hear what God has to say to us.

**Cantor:**

As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you;  
You shall see, and your heart shall rejoice.  
(Isaiah 66. 13-14)

**All:** Dear God, as a mother comforts her child, comfort us that our hearts may rejoice.

**Cantor:**

As a father has kindness on his children,  
so the LORD has kindness on those who revere him  
(Ps 103.13)

**All:** O Lord, as a father has kindness on his children, bestow your kindness on us.

**Cantor:**

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,  
and before you were born I consecrated you; (Jer 1.5)

**All:** O God, you knew us before we were formed in the womb and you consecrated us before we were born for your service.

**A brief period of reflective silence follows**

**Cantor:** sings once

-taken from Psalm 143.1ff-

O Lord Hear My Prayer  
O Lord Hear My Prayer  
When I Call Answer Me  
O Lord Hear My Prayer  
O Lord Hear My Prayer  
Come and Listen to Me.

**All (read):**

**-Psalm 143-**

Hear my prayer, O LORD,  
Give ear to my supplications!  
When I call answer me in Your faithfulness,  
in Your righteousness!(v.1)  
I stretch out my hands to You;  
My soul longs for You, as a parched land. (v.6)  
Teach me the way in which I should walk;  
For to You I lift up my soul. (v.8b)  
Teach me to do Your will,  
For You are my God; (v. 10a)

**Cantor:** sings once

O Lord Hear My Prayer  
O Lord Hear My Prayer  
When I Call Answer Me  
O Lord Hear My Prayer  
O Lord Hear My Prayer  
Come and Listen to Me.

**A brief period of reflective silence follows**

**An Examination of Consciousness:**

**Narrator:**

The Examination of Consciousness is an ancient spiritual practice that helps us reflect on God's daily activity in our life. Let us ask God to help us reflect upon the following questions

**Celebrant:** God, what would you have me do during this advent season that I have not done in past seasons?

**A period of reflective silence follows**

**Celebrant:** God, what needs healing in my life?

## A period of reflective silence follows

**Celebrant:** God, do I need to make amends with anyone?

## A period of reflective silence follows

**Cantor:** Bless the Lord, my soul  
And bless God's holy name.  
Bless the Lord, my soul  
Who leads me into life.

-taken from Psalm 103-

**All (read):**

### -Psalm 103-

Bless the LORD, my soul, and all that is within me,  
bless God's holy name.  
Bless the LORD, my soul, and do not forget all God's benefits—  
who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases,  
who redeems your life from the Pit,  
who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,  
who satisfies you with good as long as you live  
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.  
The LORD works vindication and justice  
for all who are oppressed. (vv. 1-6)

**Cantor:** Bless the Lord, my soul  
And bless God's holy name.  
Bless the Lord, my soul  
Who leads me into life.

## The Nicene Creed

**Celebrant:** Let us stand and profess our faith together

We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, light from light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary  
and was made man.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**Everyone sits**

**Eucharist Begins**

**Celebrant:** The scriptures encourage us to examine ourselves before Holy Communion. Let us reflect upon the following words of Christ and our desire to fulfill these words

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself'" (Matthew 22.37-39)

**A brief period of reflective silence.**

**Celebrant:** Let us pray

**All:** Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent, for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

**Cantor:** sings once then everyone joins in the following meditative petition Kyrie eleison/Christe eleison (Lord have mercy/Christ mercy)

Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison  
Christe eleison, Christe eleison, Christe eleison, Christe eleison  
Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison.

**Celebrant:**

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for

many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**All:** Christ has died.  
Christ is risen.  
Christ will come again.

**Celebrant:**

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. Amen.

### **The Breaking of the Bread**

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.

A period of silence is kept.

**Celebrant:** Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

**All:** Therefore let us keep the feast

**Celebrant:** The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

***NOTE: Everyone is invited to take communion.***

**Cantor:** sings once before everyone joins in the meditation

Eat this bread, drink this cup,  
Come to me and never be hungry.  
Eat this bread, drink this cup,  
Trust in me and you will not thirst.

### **The Prayer of Thanksgiving**

**Celebrant:**

Holy, gracious and loving God, you have drawn us to your heart, and nourished us at your table with holy food and drink, the body and Blood of Christ. Now send us forth to be your servants in the world, and to proclaim your truth, this day and evermore. Amen.

### **Closing Prayer**

**Celebrant:** Let us pray

**All:**

The people walking in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
for those living in the land of the shadow of death  
a light has dawned.  
For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given,  
and the government will be on his shoulders.  
And he will be called  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
Of the increase of his government and peace  
there will be no end.  
He will reign on David's throne  
and over his kingdom,  
establishing and upholding it

with justice and righteousness  
from that time on and forever.  
The zeal of the LORD Almighty  
will accomplish this.

(Isa 9. 2, 6-7)

**Celebrant:** Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**All:** Thanks be to God.

**Everyone is Invited for Light Refreshments Next Door.**

**Afterwards, Everyone is Invited  
to a No-Host Dinner at a Local Restaurant**

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