



How do the spiritual themes of Advent connect with discernment?

By Sister Cheryl Rose, HM (click [here](#) for the original)

In our culture, Advent is often experienced as the pre-Christmas season of frenzied shopping, rushed decorating, and endless parties and gatherings. Oh! And churches decked out in purple. We know Christmas is more than Santa Claus, rich cookies, and a nativity scene. But this short, sacred season can sweep past us in a blur and we barely ponder why we are once again waiting for a Messiah who came 2,000 years ago.

I love giving retreats and evenings of reflection in this short but spiritually hefty season of themes that are not really part of any other time of the liturgical season. So, what are the rich spiritual themes of Advent—and how do they connect with discernment?

Advent is about waiting for something that you need but don't have, someone you love but have not seen, something you can hope in amid the world's overwhelming darkness. If you have ever been perplexed by the events of life, confused by the presence of suffering or oppression, saddened by the seeming lack of meaning or of goodness in the world, then you need a Messiah!

Yes, Jesus came in history over 2,000 years ago, but you, WE, need the Messiah to come afresh in our world with His message of hope and His promise of Light. During Advent we are called to hold the darkness, and in that space yearn for God to come again into our world, into our lives. But in order to do that, we have to stop long enough to see that all the tinsel and all the wrapped gifts still don't fill our hearts with peace. All the loud carols and bright decorations cannot bring deep inner calm like the voice of God experienced in the quiet of our prayer.

“People who are trying to make an important or weighty decision in their life are living a kind of Advent.”

People who are trying to make an important or weighty decision in their life are living a kind of Advent. They are waiting for God's guidance to come with a clarity that will bring light into their life and a focus into their living. They are waiting to see the face their soul longs for, the face that will look back at them with complete love and acceptance. If you are one on the path of

discerning, put on your Advent spirit and wait in the dark until the Light of God springs forth! For it will come. It will surely come. “Be stouthearted, wait for the Lord.” (Psalm 27:14) He is coming !

For reflection:

How will you “put on your Advent spirit” this season?



Blessed Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger reminds us:

“No time is more suitable for practicing humility than the holy time of Advent, in which we celebrate the mystery of the incarnation, which is and remains always a mystery of deepest humility.”

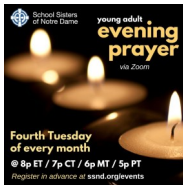
(Letter #5013, 12.14.1874)



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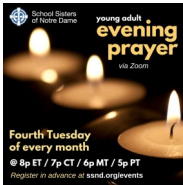
MERRY CHRISTMAS!!



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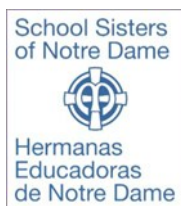
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God's cause
is the *only* concern of
our hearts
Blessed Theresa of Jesus
Catherine

