



**THE ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS  
DEVOTIONAL CALENDAR  
2021**

**28 November – 25 December**



**LICHFIELD**  
CATHEDRAL  
**RE▶SOURCE**  
Recovering together

 **How to use it**

- Try and set aside 5-15 minutes every day.
- Buy or use a special candle to light each day as you read and pray through the suggestions on the calendar.
- Try and 'eat simply' – one day each week try going without so many calories or too much rich food, just have enough.
- Try to donate to a charity working with the homeless or the people of Bethlehem.
- Try to pray through what you see and notice going on around you in people, the media and nature.

 **Who is it for?**

- For everyone who uses the Cathedral website/social media.
- For all the Cathedral community.
- For people you want to send it to and invite to share in the daily devotional exercise.

 **What's the last week about?**

The last week of Advent is special: at Evensong (evening prayer) a special antiphon is sung or said before and after the canticle of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Magnificat. Each begins with an 'O' and relates to some facet of Christ's nature and ancestry.

December 17 O Sapientia	Wisdom
December 18 O Adonai	Lord of Israel
December 19 O Radix Jesse	Root of Jesse (Jesse was the father of King David)
December 20 O Clavis David	Key of David
December 21 O Oriens	Morning Star rising in the East
December 22 O Rex Gentium	King of all nations
December 23 O Immanuel	Immanuel – 'God is with us'

As the week draws us to Christmas so the note of longing love intensifies.

 **Why make an effort this Advent?**

- Because we live in difficult and unusual times.
- This is a simple prayer and bible-reading exercise to help us use the Advent Season as a time of preparation for the coming of Christ.
- It is designed to take us on a journey, looking back to John the Baptist and Mary the Mother of Jesus; looking out into the world today, into our own hearts and experience; outwards again to Jesus Christ as he encounters us in life today and in his promise to be with us always.
- Advent is the Church's mindful antidote to some of the diversion and consumerism of a modern Christmas. It prepares us to encounter Christ again in his joy and humility.

# ADVENT 1

## **Sunday 28 November**

*Read St Luke 21: 25-36*

Ask for grace to keep Advent well – alertness to what’s going on around us, ready to see signs of God’s kingdom in people, events, in the readiness to cooperate with his will.

## **Monday 29 November, Day of Intercession for the missionary work of the Church**

*Read Romans 10: 12-18*

Give thanks for all who have brought the good news of Jesus Christ to us, our nation and the whole world. Pray for our own Church and our Cathedral community to witness joyfully and boldly.

## **Tuesday 30 November, St Andrew**

*Read St Matthew 4: 18-22*

Reflect on what made Jesus’s disciples drop everything to follow him. Ask for grace that we may hear and see freshly and vividly what each of us is called to and how we are to follow Christ.

## **Wednesday 1 December**

*Read St Matthew 15: 29-37*

Reflect on Jesus’s compassion – how moved he was by human need and how he met those needs. Pray for people utterly destitute today, ask Christ for a share in his compassion.

## **Thursday 2 December**

*Read St Matthew 7: 21, 24-27*

In a confusing world with much competing wisdom ask the Holy Spirit for guidance and direction in all the big decisions each of us has to make, to rebuild where necessary, to centre our lives on true foundations.

## **Friday 3 December**

*Read St Matthew 9: 27-31*

As we make personal and family preparations for Christmas, listen to where you ache, hope, and what you long for. Bring that need and desire to Christ. Ask for his grace and light.

## **Saturday 4 December**

*Read St Matthew 9: 35-10: 1, 6-8*

Reflect on how Jesus gives his disciples a share in his work (ministry). Think about the opportunities we have to take up that work. What would it look like? What would my role be?

# ADVENT 2

## Sunday 5 December

*Read St Luke 3: 1-6*

Reflect on the role of John the Baptist. Pray to be stirred again this Advent and awakened to the full extent of God's love and purpose for us and the world.

## Monday 6 December, St Nicholas

*Read Isaiah 61: 1-3*

Pray for all children living in poverty, resolve to be part of the answer to that prayer. Give to the Children's Society.

\*Become informed about its work. <https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/>

\*Sign up for monthly prayer emails, which offers a topical prayer for each week that month: <https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/how-you-can-help/support-in-church#prayer>

\*Sign up to hear about The Children's Society campaigns:

<https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/how-you-can-help/campaign#signup>

\*Explore volunteering roles:

<https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/how-you-can-help/volunteer-to-help-children>

\*How you can fundraise: <https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/how-you-can-help/fundraise-and-events>

## Tuesday 7 December, St Ambrose of Milan

*Read 2 Corinthians 5: 16-21*

Pray for all teachers of the faith and all Christian leaders. Ask that they may be gifted with knowledge, wisdom and love and the skill to communicate and encourage.

## Thursday 9 December

*Read St Matthew 11: 11-15*

Give thanks for all God's prophets who point out what's happening. Think about and pray for all who shun and oppose the Christian faith and those Christians persecuted for their faith.

## Saturday 11 December

*Read St Matthew 17: 10-13*

Reflect on how the Christian faith was born amidst hesitancy and confusion, of things half-understood being re-framed. Pray for grace to work through the questions and find true wisdom.

## Wednesday 8 December, Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

*Read Ephesians 1: 3-6, 11-12*

Reflect on this passage. God creates us that we may share his love and glory. As we give thanks for the role Mary played in the unfolding of God's purpose, ask that we may be fully alert to what God desires from us and for us.

## Friday 10 December

*Read St Matthew 11: 16-19*

Reflect on how easy it is to miss the point and the deep treasure in what has become familiar to us, how we're easily manipulated by public opinion. Pray for true insight.

# ADVENT 3

## **Sunday 12 December**

*Read St Luke 3: 7-18*

John the Baptist was the servant of his vision. In a dangerous world full of threats about our planet's survival, what is our/your vision and hope for the future? Write down three words to express it.

## **Monday 13 December, St Lucy**

*Read St Luke 11: 33-36*

Pray for the integrity of all Christian people. That we may be signs of the healing and truthful light of Jesus Christ. That we may repent of our sin and warm the world with our love.

## **Wednesday 15 December**

*Read St Luke 7: 18b-23*

People thought John the Baptist was the Messiah, the Christ. Reflect on this passage: what does Jesus say about his credentials? What convinces you about him?

## **Friday 17 December, O Sapientia**

*Read St Matthew 1: 1-17*

St Matthew sketches out the ancestry of Jesus: it's full of broken, strange, disreputable people. God works in them and through them. Can you see encouragement and hope in all this?

## **Tuesday 14 December, St John of the Cross**

*Read 1 Corinthians 2: 1-10*

Give thanks for all who help us and teach us to pray. Share St Augustine's prayer: "My life shall be a real life being full of thee". Spend some time in silent reflection.

## **Thursday 16 December**

*Read St Luke 7: 24-30*

Reflect on this passage: as people get closer to Jesus they become mystified and troubled by him. He says uncomfortable things. What do you/we find difficult or troubling about him? Pray those things to him.

## **Saturday 18 December, O Adonai**

*Read St Matthew 1: 18-24*

Think about Joseph's role in standing by Mary and providing the security and steadfastness for Jesus's life. How do we cope with changed expectations and changed responsibilities? Pray for grace and guidance.

# ADVENT 4

## **Sunday 19 December, O Radix Jesse**

*Read St Luke 1: 39-45*

As you read about Elizabeth rejoicing over the children she and Mary are bearing, earth-shaking events are beginning, the Lord is coming among us. What praise can we offer this Christmas? What's our song of gladness?

## **Monday 20 December, O Clavis David**

*Read St Luke 1: 26-38*

Mary says a great and courageous "yes" to God. She is the pattern and prototype of every Christian. Pray about our readiness to be at God's disposal – to be used in his service. Pray about what may be exciting or frightening.

## **Wednesday 22 December, O Rex Gentium**

*Read St Luke 1: 57-66*

Reflect on this story: God is shaping a new future and this new-born child will be the herald of a new age. Pray for the new born – for all the hope and promise they bring, for parents wondering about their children's future.

## **Friday 24 December, Christmas Eve**

*Read St Luke 2: 1-14*

As we begin the celebrations, pray for the people with whom you'll share Christmas: for the story of Jesus's birth, the tenderness and humility of it all, casting its light on all human pomposity and ideas of power. Pray for everyone you love, cherish them before God.

## **Tuesday 21 December, O Oriens**

*Read St Luke 1: 46-55*

Mary and Elizabeth recognised God's work in the children they were bearing. The world would be re-made through them, all its values turned upside down. Reflect on this text, what can you hear? What is difficult?

## **Thursday 23 December, O Immanuel**

*Read St Luke 1: 67-79*

This song of Zechariah – blessing God for John's birth – is said every morning in church. It praises God for the fulfilment of promises and the bright light God will shine on all in darkness and the shadow of death. Thank God for the mercy of his purpose, and the outpouring of his love.

## **Saturday 25 December, Christmas Day**

*Read St John 1: 1-14*

On this most splendid day, give thanks that God in Jesus has come to us, to be among us, to make his home among us, to abolish the distance between us. Nothing is alien to his mercy, no one is ruled out of his love. "God is with us – Emmanuel".



# ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

## Services and Events

<b>27 November – 2 January</b>	The Christmas Tree Festival during visitor opening hours
<b>27 &amp; 28 November</b>	Advent Carol Services: From Darkness to Light <b>18:00</b>
<b>5 December</b>	Christmas Light Service <b>15:00</b> St Giles' Light Up a Life <b>20:00</b>
<b>7 December</b>	Cathedral Chorus and Salvation Army Carols <b>19:30</b>
<b>8 December</b>	Candlelit Vigil: Time to Reflect and Remember <b>18:30</b>
<b>11 December</b>	Christmas by Candlelight Concert <b>19:30</b>
<b>12 December</b>	Giving the Gift Service <b>15:00</b> Emergency Services Carol Service <b>17:30</b>
<b>16 – 22 December</b>	The Cathedral Illuminated: The Manger <b>from 17:30</b>
<b>18 December</b>	Shoppers Carols around the Christmas Tree <b>14:00, 15:00 &amp; 16:00</b>
<b>23 &amp; 24 December</b>	Festival of Lessons and Carols <b>18:00</b>
<b>24 December</b>	Crib and Christingle Service <b>15:00</b> Festival of Lessons and Carols <b>18:00</b> Midnight Mass: First Eucharist of Christmas <b>22:00</b>
<b>25 December</b>	Choral Eucharist <b>10:30</b> Evening Prayer with Carols at the Crib <b>16:00</b>

For details of all our events and services please visit our website

<https://www.lichfield-cathedral.org/>