

# Advent in the Southern Hemisphere

Summer in the Southern Hemisphere begins in December, heralding a season of warmth and light. It coincides with the liturgical season of **Advent**, which is a time of promise, preparation, hope, expectation, and participation in this season God reveals himself through Jesus, the Word made flesh.

Advent calls us to reflect on our lives as Christians. It is a time to put aside feelings of meaninglessness, powerlessness, apathy and of taking life for granted. It is a time to be prepared, and if necessary, be scorned like Noah building his ark.

It is about believing that, *with God with us*, we can make a difference, and reach out into the darkness of war, poverty, terrorism, ecological imbalance, violence and revenge, and shape a better world for all peoples.

To influence a change in the global world requires reflection on our own personal relationships. Are they characterised by warmth, goodwill, and peace to all? This Christmas joy is reflected in many ways and just to name a few... a smile, a kind word, a gentle touch and reaching out to others and preparing the Christmas crib.

Pause for quiet prayer and reflection.

We pray that during these summer days of advent we may see with new insight and hear with new clarity the joy of your message.

*Giver of Peace, hear us.*

Jesus, Light of the World, you come to bring us hope and courage. May we see with new eyes the signs of hope and courage around us and see traces of your presence in our everyday life.

*Jesus, Light of the World, hear us.*

Jesus, human face of God, you come to show us how to be more fully human in our giving to an unjust and frightened world. Free our ears to hear Your Word and stir our hearts to love with compassion and reconciliation for all peoples.

*Jesus, human face of God, hear us.*

Emmanuel, God with us, you concretise the themes of waiting, expectation, hope, unconditional love, and repentance. May we listen, hear, touch, taste and see the good news of your love and make room for others in our hearts.

*Emmanuel, God with us, hear us.*

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, teach us humility, tolerance to all races, creeds and colours, and indifference to the material things of this world.

*Lord, hear our prayer*

## Closing Prayer.

God of Integrity, our hearts desire the warmth of your love, and our minds are searching for the light of your Word in a world troubled by violence and pain.

Quiet us in your holy stillness that we may hear your voice amidst the business of our lives.

Prepare our hearts for both the unexpected and expected comings of Christ into our lives this Christmas.

Give us the gifts of expectation and hope that we may find the Sacred in all places this December journey.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, the source of joy, light and peace. May the brightness of His rising shine in the Church so that the Nations may walk towards the light, Jesus, the Christ, our Lord. Amen.



## Reflect on the following.

To influence a change in Australia and our world requires reflection on our own personal relationships. Are they characterised by warmth, goodwill, and peace to all? Advent can reflect joy in many ways. By reaching out or by offering a smile, a kind word, a gentle touch to someone can make their day!

How well do I believe that, *with God with us*, and that I can make a difference, and reach out into the darkness of war, poverty, violence, ecological imbalance, homelessness, and the lonely, and shape a better world for all peoples?