



A Mini Retreat for Yourself or in a Group □ 45 – 50 min.

Dedicated to Priests

Leader: As we enter the holy season of Advent, we turn to Mary -- the first disciple, the first tabernacle, the first to welcome Christ into the world. Her quiet obedience and unwavering faith reveal how God works through hearts that listen, trust, and surrender. As a priest, we are called to that same fiat -- to say "Yes" daily, to receive Christ anew, and to make Him present in the world through my words and service. Advent is not merely a time of waiting; it is a time of becoming. That

is, becoming more like Mary in faith, in how we bring forth Christ, and becoming more like Christ in love.

MARY'S "YES" PREPARING FOR THE HEART OF CHRIST

ALL: Heavenly Father, as I enter this season of holy waiting, I look to Mary, Your faithful servant, who opened her heart completely to Your word. Grant me her spirit of trust and obedience, that my priesthood may bear fruit rooted in humility and grace. Renew within me the joy of my priestly call, and help me, like her, to bring Christ's presence into every heart I touch. As You once looked upon Mary with favor, look upon me now, Your servant, and strengthen my heart for the work ahead. May my embrace this Advent time of preparation.

When the weight of priestly service feels heavy, teach me to lean into Your mercy, and when my faith feels weary, remind me of Mary's steadfast hope. Let her example of silent strength and humble courage shape my service to Your people. May I learn, as she did, to listen before I speak, to trust before I see, and to love without counting the cost. I ask this through Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit. Amen

Leader: Holy Mary, Mother of God, we turn to you in faith and devotion, asking your guidance for our ministry. May we follow in your footsteps, bringing Jesus to God's children with a heart humble and pure. Grant us steadfast faith, unwavering in trials, and the courage to say "yes" to God's will each day of Advent. Fill us with charity, so that my words and deeds as a priest may reflect Your Son's love.

Teach us obedience, that in surrendering our hearts to God, we may serve with joy and fidelity. Holy Mother, pray for us, that through your example, we may lead souls closer to Christ. Inspire us in our priestly ministry. By your tender intercession, by every homily, sacrament, and act of service, may we shine with Your light.

Meditate on the following:

As a priest, I am called to follow the example of Mother Mary, who brought Christ into the world through her humble obedience and steadfast faith. Her life shows me that true service begins with a heart fully surrendered to God's will. Mary's quiet strength and attentive love allowed her to draw others closer to Jesus simply by her presence and actions.

In the same way, my priestly ministry invites me to make Christ present in the lives of those I serve, through word, sacrament, and example. This is my Advent call. I am called to approach each day with humility, noticing the needs of souls entrusted to me, and responding with charity and fidelity. As Mary's hands held Jesus up for us, so my hands hold Jesus before all God's children.

Reader 1: Heavenly Father, we come before You in faith, seeking the courage and trust Mary displayed

when she said, "Let it be done to me according to Your word." Open my heart in this time of reflection, that we may hear Your voice in the quiet and allow Your Spirit to guide my thoughts and actions. May we keep alive the passion to make every day a day of Advent. Teach us to serve with humility, lead with compassion, and act with your strength.

Grant us a heart that burns with Your grace and a mind attuned to Your wisdom, so we may see clearly the daily Advent work we have been called to and the work still ahead. Help us to pray deeply, to reflect often, and to walk faithfully in Your ways. May we follow the example of Mother Mary, whose faithful ministry continues to inspire the world, and allow her patience, love, and steadfast faith to guide every act of service we offer. Help us consider these upcoming questions inspired by Mary's life – Mary's daily Advent preparation. Amen.

ALL: Amen.

ALL: Heavenly Father, as I enter this season of holy waiting, I look to Mary, Your faithful servant, who opened her heart completely to Your word. Grant me her spirit of trust and obedience, that my priestly service may bear fruit rooted in humility and grace. Renew within me the joy of my priestly call, and help me, like her, to bring Christ's presence into every heart I touch. Advent calls me for this purpose. Help me always to serve in 'personae Christi'. Amen.

EMBRACING HUMILITY AND OBEDIENCE

Reader 2: As a priest, we are called to embrace humility, recognizing that our strength comes not from myself but from God's grace working through me. Obedience to His will guides our steps, even when the path is uncertain or the challenges ahead seem daunting. By reflecting on these truths, we prepare my heart to serve faithfully, trusting that each act of ministry, however difficult, participates in God's saving work.

Reader 3: Mary's "yes" was total -- not conditional, not calculated. She embraced the mystery before her, allowing God's word to take root. In our own life as a priest, our fiat renews itself in every Mass, every act of service, and every unseen moment of surrender.

Read, Meditate and Discuss:

Read: Luke 1:26–38 - *Obedience of the Heart - Saying "yes" to God's Call*

Meditate and Discuss:

- ◆ Where in my priestly life is God inviting me to a deeper "yes"?
- ◆ Do I respond to God's call with confidence or hesitation?
- ◆ How can Mary's trust reshape my daily response to uncertainty?

Reader 4: Mary's song magnifies the Lord, not herself. True humility is not self-denial but joyful recognition that all good comes from God. In our ministry as a priest, it finds its purity when our hearts echo her Magnificat. -- "He who is mighty has done great things for me."

Read, Meditate and Discuss:

Read: Luke 1:46–55 - *Humility of the Soul – Giving Glory to God Alone.*

Meditate and Discuss:

- ◆ How do I give glory to God rather than seek affirmation from others?
- ◆ How can gratitude deepen my humility and renew my joy?
- ◆ What is my own "Magnificat" -- how is God magnified through me?
- ◆ How do I fulfill my Advent duties?

ENTERING A HOLY STILLNESS

Reader 5: Mary did not understand all that unfolded around her -- yet she pondered, trusted, and remained faithful. As priests, we too experience hidden seasons, unanswered prayers, and quiet struggles. Advent invites me into holy stillness, where my faith matures in silence.

Read, Meditate and Discuss:

Read: Luke 2:15–19 -- *Faith in Silence -- Trusting When God Seems Hidden.*

Meditate and Discuss:

- ◆ How do I respond when God's plan feels unclear?
- ◆ What helps me to keep faith alive in seasons of weariness?
- ◆ How can I help others find peace in the mystery of waiting?

Reader 6: Mary notices the need -- "They have no wine" -- and draws others to Christ: "Do whatever He tells you." Her quiet intercession and initiative reveal priestly love in action -- noticing, serving, and pointing all things toward Christ.

Read Meditate and Discuss:

Read: John 2:1–11 -- *Noticing the Needs of Others More Deeply.*

Meditate and Discuss:

- ◆ Do I act from compassion, or from duty alone?
- ◆ How can I intercede like Mary -- gently guiding others to Christ?
- ◆ What is the "new wine" Christ wants to bring through my priestly ministry?

SERVING ALONGSIDE MOTHER MARY

Leader: We open our hearts in this time, that we may listen for God's voice in the stillness and allow His Spirit to shape our lives. This Advent may the Lord help us to serve with humility, to lead with compassion, and to love with the strength that comes from Him alone. May Mary's example inspire us to say "yes" to the ordinary and extraordinary moments of discipleship that are placed before us as priests.

ALL: Lord God, I thank You for this time of reflection, fellowship, and renewal in faith. You have called me, like Mary, to trust Your plan and to bring Your love into the world through service and strength. Help me carry the Advent spirit of this gathering into my daily life -- with the courage to act, humility to serve, and a heart open to Your will. May my parish family see in me the compassion of Christ, the devotion of Mary, and the gentleness of Joseph. Renew within me the joy of my priestly Advent call to bring Christ's presence into every heart I touch. I ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.