



Mary, Our Guide Through Advent

A Mini Retreat for Yourself or in a Group
45-50 minutes □ Designed for Seniors

Leader: Welcome to this Advent prayer retreat, where we will focus on allowing Mary, the Mother of our Lord, to guide us through this sacred season.

As seniors, we carry a wealth of experience and wisdom, and this retreat is an opportunity to deepen our faith and preparation for the coming of Christ. Let us open our hearts to the gentle guidance of Mary, who is a model of trust, patience, and love.

Leader: Begin by finding a comfortable and quiet place where you can sit peacefully. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths, allowing yourself to become present in this moment.

Opening Prayer

All: Holy Mother Mary, you who walked the path of faith with unwavering trust, we invite you to be our guide during this time of waiting. As the senior members of our community reflect on the journey of life, may your loving presence provide them with comfort and inspiration.

Lord, grant us the strength and courage to embrace each day with hope and resilience. May we find solace in Mary's gentle guidance, knowing that her love and compassion are ever present. Help us to open our hearts to the spirit of Advent, to prepare with anticipation for the coming of Christ. May we be filled with peace, joy, and a renewed sense of purpose as we reflect on the blessings of the past and the promises of the future.

We ask you, Lord, to surround your senior citizens with a community of support and love, where we can share our wisdom and experience. May our collective journey through Advent be enriched by the stories and insights of those who have walked before us. In your holy name, we pray. Amen.

Mary's Role in Advent

Reader 1: Reflect on the role of Mary in the Advent season. Consider how her acceptance of God's will serves as an example for us all. *Read the following scripture passages:*

- ◆ Luke 1:26-38: The Annunciation
- ◆ Luke 1:46-55: The Magnificat

Meditate, share and take a few moments to journal your thoughts on the last page, noting any insights or feelings that arise.

- ◆ How does Mary's response to the angel inspire you in your own faith journey?
- ◆ What can you learn from Mary's humility and trust in God's plan?
- ◆ How have you used portions of the Annunciation and Magnificat through the years?

Embracing Mary's Qualities

Reader 2: It's time to focus on embodying the qualities of Mary. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths to center yourself. Imagine Mary standing before you, radiating peace and love. As you envision her, think about the qualities she embodies—humility, obedience, courage, and faith. Picture yourself embracing these qualities in your own life. Let these affirmations fill you with a sense of peace and purpose.

Repeat these affirmations silently to yourself:

- ◆ "With Mary's humility, I accept what God has planned for me."
- ◆ "With Mary's courage, I face life's challenges with grace."
- ◆ "With Mary's faith, I trust in God's love and guidance."
- ◆ "With Mary as Jesus' mother, she is also my mother, and I am never alone."

Meditate and Share:

- ◆ How did the affirmations make you feel?
- ◆ With all your experience of Advents in the past, do you feel that this Advent will be different?
- ◆ If yes, how will it be different and if no, why?

Silent Prayer and Meditation for Advent

Reader 3: Take this time for silent prayer and reflection. Allow yourself to be in the presence of God, offering your thoughts, concerns, and hopes for the Advent season. You may wish to light a candle as a symbol of Christ's light entering the world.

As you sit in silence, focus on the love and hope that Advent brings. Know that you won't be alone, for Mary is with you. Meditate on how you can prepare your heart to welcome Jesus.

Closing Prayer

All: Holy Mary, Mother of God, we thank you for your unwavering faith, love and guidance. As we journey through Advent, help us to follow your example of trust and devotion. Guide us to open our hearts to God's will, like never before, and to embrace hope and joy for of the Christmas season. May we carry the light of Christ to all those we meet. Amen.

Leader: May the peace and blessings of the Advent season accompany you always and may we continue to carry the spirit of this retreat into our daily life, allowing Mary's guidance to inspire our actions and thoughts as we prepare for the joyous celebration of Christmas. May this time of reflection bring peace and deepen our connection to the divine.

Notes: