

Waiting in Hope

Reflections for the Season of Advent



The Season of Advent provides us with an opportunity to reflect and prepare for the coming of Christ into our hearts and our homes.

We have produced a series of short reflections using Fra Angelico's painting of The Annunciation

The first week of Advent

The Annunciation

Look at Fra Angelico's painting (1430-32) from the monastery of San Marco in Florence. Over the centuries people have found this painting has helped them to reflect on the mystery of the Annunciation.



Read the account of the Annunciation in Luke 1:26-38

Look at the painting

Mary has received a message which has turned her whole world upside down; nothing will be the same again.

As you reflect on this look back on the year; recall how it has been for you. Sit with your feelings as they arise.

Have you been able to turn to God to make sense of what is happening to you, can you turn to God now?

The second week of Advent



‘Greetings favoured one!
The Lord is with you.’

*Have you received news, or come to an understanding
which you know, like the messenger, is ‘sent by God’?*

*Have you ever felt that the
‘Lord is with you’?
Reflect on those times as you
look at the angel.*

The third week of Advent



‘But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.’

The image of Mary in the painting does not give any hint of her anxiety on being greeted by the angel.

Can you identify with Mary; how frightened she might have felt?

What thoughts and questions might have been going through her mind?

Are you able to speak to God now about your doubts and difficulties?

The fourth week of Advent



Then Mary said: 'Here I am, the servant of the Lord;
let it be with me according to your word.'

*In the painting, Mary and the angel mirror each other,
with arms crossed and heads bent.*

*They are in harmony with each other.
The struggle is over, the decision made.
Mary has said 'yes' to God.*

*Nothing in the painting suggests the enormity of what is
taking place. The transformation is silent, interior,
mysterious. It is like the silence of prayer.*

*Be silent for a few moments
inviting God to make a dwelling place within you.*