

...But let me not forget my lonely moments because it does not take much to make that loneliness reappear.

If I am able to remember loneliness during joy,  
I might be able to remember joy during loneliness  
and be stronger to face it and help others face it ...  
When Jesus was loneliest, he gave most.

-Father Henri Nouwen



## CLOSING PRAYER

We advent each other in simple steps:

smiles, caring, inclusion...  
polite gestures of reverent affirmation.  
Silent and subtly pointing our way to Bethlehem.  
Each journey is a singular—  
a personal mystery, sojourns of paradox  
Waiting, yet searching.  
We pack our bags differently these days.  
The traveling itself may seem burden and baggage enough.

The empty crib stands before us—  
Hidden at some distant place  
(always in disguise)  
Patiently awaiting our arrival.  
The Saviour within us and about us  
Cries out for incarnated birth  
Once more to be heard in a land of hopeless hearts.

—Source Unknown



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## JOYFUL WAITING



*We are joyful now  
because we know that the  
Lord will come...*



## INTRODUCTION

Today we gather together for the third week of Advent. The third candle is the candle of joy. Today our readings and song reflect the Advent theme of waiting in joyful expectation of coming glory.



We start our celebration with the lighting of the advent wreath candles. While we light the candles, we reflect upon the joyous coming of the Lord.

## LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE

O God,  
as light comes from this candle,  
may the blessing of Jesus Christ  
come to us, warming our hearts and  
brightening our way.

May Christ our Saviour bring life  
into the darkness of this world,  
and to us, as we wait for his  
coming.

**All: Amen**



## SCRIPTURE READING: LUKE 1: 46-56



And Mary said,  
'My soul magnifies the Lord,  
and my spirit rejoices in God  
my Saviour, for he has looked with fa-  
vour on the lowliness of his servant.  
Surely, from now on all generations will  
call me blessed; for the Mighty One has  
done great things for me, and holy is his  
name. His mercy is for those who fear  
him from generation to generation.  
He has shown strength with his arm; he  
has scattered the proud in the thoughts  
of their hearts. He has brought down the  
powerful from their thrones, and lifted  
up the lowly; he has filled the hungry  
with good things, and sent the rich away  
empty.  
He has helped his servant Israel, in re-  
membrance of his mercy,  
according to the promise he made to our  
ancestors, to Abraham and to his de-  
scendants for ever.' The Gospel of the  
Lord.

**All: Praise to You, Lord Jesus  
Christ.**



## A TIME OF JOYFUL WAITING

We are joyful now because we know  
that the Lord will come.

Our expectation leads to joy and our  
joy to a desire to give to others.  
Real joy always wants to share.

It belongs to the nature of joy  
to communicate itself to others  
and to invite others to take part in  
the gifts we have received.

Advent is a time of joyful waiting  
and joyful giving...

But it is not only a period of joy.  
It is also a time when those who are  
lonely feel lonelier than at other  
times of the year.

Those who have hope feel much joy  
and desire to give. Those who have  
no hope feel more depressed than  
ever and are often thrown back  
on their lonely selves in despair . . .

Surrounded by a loving, supportive  
community,

Advent and Christmas seem pure  
joy...