

# WPC Advent Prayer and Reflection

## Weeks Three and Four

**Leader:** God of Providence, as we continue together in this special season of advent waiting and expectation, bless us with particular graces of listening, dialogue and discernment.

**All:** May your Spirit guide us in our search to be your loving presence watching over the created universe. We entrust ourselves to your transformative Love. Amen.



**Readings: adapted from *Providence and Compassion*:  
A collection of personal reflections from multiple disciplines**

“Compassion is often defined as kindness, mercy, or sympathy. But when coupled with God’s providence, it deepens and brings a sense of joy in being present with patients on their journeys to healing. Henri Nouwen says: ‘being with a person in pain, offering simple presence to someone in despair, sharing with a friend in times of confusion and uncertainty...such experiences can bring us deep joy. Not happiness, not excitement, not great satisfaction, but the quiet joy of being there for someone else and living in deep solidarity with our brothers and sisters in this human family.’”  
--Sylvia Resha, CDP Associate

“When humility and gratefulness for others in our lives are fully accepted and attributed to God whose providence places these relationships in our paths, we may recognize that we have come into communion with one another.”  
--Mary Louise Barba, MCDP +

“I see the hand of Providence guiding and directing me, both in times I knew and in times in which I was clueless. I learned that God works through ordinary people and circumstances and that I must trust that all my actions are within God’s providential care. ...I feel that compassion is the true test of spirituality, which brings us into relationship with the Transcendent One we call God. Matthew 6:25-34 tells us not to be anxious nor to take thought for the morrow. In other words, be open to the inspiration of the moment, trust in the availability of wisdom and the promise that Jesus will be with us all the way.”  
--Joan Mullen, SP +

“I love the Gospel where the Good Samaritan, out of his compassion for the suffering person he met on his journey, brought him to an inn for comfort and care. These two themes of being a pilgrim and an innkeeper sum up my experience of living Providence as a compassionate presence especially in my ministries in retreat and spiritual direction work. ...in the Celtic tradition, a person with a compassionate presence is called an *anam cara*, a soul friend. Being an elder, an innkeeper, an *anam cara* for others is now my deepest joy.”  
--Ruth McGoldrick, SP

**Continued on the next page.**

## ***Quiet Reflection and Sharing***

- *Where have I found quiet joy?*
- *How have I experienced being in communion with another?*
- *In this advent journey where have I met compassionate presence?*
- *One of the best gifts we can give and receive is the gift of listening.  
How have I given and received this precious gift in the last two weeks of Advent waiting?*

### **Closing Prayer: adapted from “The Art of Providence” prayer by Dorothy Lentz, SP +**

Provident God,  
you have given us a mission to plumb  
the depths of the mysteries of  
compassionate love.  
You have chosen us to be prophets,  
to proclaim loudly and visibly God’s loving concern  
for those who suffer. We are asking your Spirit  
to show us a way to be sacraments—visible signs—  
that will say to a troubled world today,  
“here we are, women and men of Providence  
who want to bring you Jesus’ message  
of hope and concerned love.  
We want you to help us know your needs  
and the best way to serve you.  
Lord Jesus, make us humble, simple, and loving  
in our search to know your will.  
May our Advent be truly enriched  
by our reflections on compassion  
and may we be that compassion  
to all those we meet. *Amen.*