

# *Why journal?*

SPIRITUAL JOURNALING IS a form of prayer. Far beyond recapping our life's events, the exercise of journaling helps us to express our spiritual life. Our written words capture our spiritual experiences, thoughts, struggles, victories – and essentially form a prayer through which we communicate to God what lies in our innermost self.

The exercise of spiritual journaling does not require us to be experienced in such a practice, nor are there any specific guidelines. When we journal, we need not worry about style or formalities. Just as in our regular prayers, Jesus wishes us to speak freely, simply and honestly what is in our heart.

This journal provides some guideline to your prayer exercise in the **Responding to the Word** section each day, where you will find a question that is directly connected to the readings of the day. If this question is helpful, feel free to use it, but do not feel constrained by it.

Spiritual journaling will essentially enlarge our vision and lead to a greater understanding of our spiritual journey.

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# *1st Sunday of Advent*

A SPECIAL FRIEND is coming to visit, a “soul friend,” one who has enriched us in every way. The problem is we have to wait. The exact day or hour of the visit is uncertain. Evening? Midnight? Dawn?

Time passes; the anticipation wears off. We tell ourselves we will be ready but we become impatient in the waiting. We realize we are not as alert and prepared as we would like. It is easy to “harden our hearts.”

Waiting is so much a part of our lives but in our instant society we have lost the gift of gracious waiting. Just look at shopping lines, at stop lights. We are in a hurry to avoid waiting.

The Advent season can help us to live our daily waiting with hope and expectation. It can help us balance and integrate the different aspects of our lives: our working, praying, playing during these four weeks of waiting to celebrate Christ’s coming.

The Advent season can help us stay alert and awake so that we are “not lacking in any spiritual gift” as the Christ event happens daily in our lives and as we prepare to celebrate it as a church community. This hope-filled expectancy as God breaks into our lives could be called “waiting on God.”

*Sr. Janet Malone, CND*

**People and Prayers to Remember this Week**

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***Readings of the Day***

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Isaiah 63.16b-17; 64.1, 3-8

(Canada)

Isaiah 63.16b-17, 19b; 64.2-7

(USA)

Psalm 80

1 Corinthians 1.3-9

Mark 13.33-37

**Responding to the Word**

Isaiah asks why God lets us wander, and yearns for God's return. Where has my spiritual wandering taken me this past year?

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