

# LOVE

ADVENT PRAYER GUIDE

WEEK 4

24 DECEMBER 2023

Section 6 - Spiritual Itinerary

COMMITTED TO FOLLOWING HIM FOR THE LIFE OF THE WORLD



Jehyun Sung

*We can place a map of the world (or newspapers with our world news) and a statue of the infant Jesus in the center with a lighted candle).*

In silence, we can listen to this Byzantine hymn of the Nativity (that orients us to the Middle East, and all the places around the world seeking for peace).

Song: [An Arabic Christmas Carol \(Byzantine Hymn of the Nativity\)](#)

“Today is born of the Virgin He who holds in his hands the whole creation.”

“We worship thy birth of Christ.”

*(during the song, the baby Jesus can be passed from hand to hand and we can pray Sophie’s prayer)*

"O Jesus, my light, my love, my life:  
let me know you alone,  
to love you alone,  
that I may live only from you, by you,  
in you and for you..."

*(Madeleine Sophie, End of her Exercises in 1839)*



Rachel Guillien rscj - Taizé

Psalm of the day: 88 (89)

**As we contemplate LOVE:**

*"Our union and conformity with the Heart of Jesus widens our capacity to love and to be loved." (Const § 62). Our spiritual itinerary invites us: The word union evokes following, intimate relationship, closeness; conformity goes beyond imitation and expresses similarity, affinity, coincidence, identification.*

As it was the first time for each of us to contemplate Jesus birth, we let our hearts be transformed, overwhelmed, amazed. From the highest came the lowest.

*Let's stay in the manger.*

**I widen my gaze...**

How shall we reveal the face of our Society in so few words?

Wherever we are, we are called to be a people with the whole People of God, with all peoples of the Earth.

Worldwide it is the same, the passion to proclaim the Gospel, urges us to probe and refocus our understanding of our mission of education, that confronts us with the world of our time and with the societies in which we live, wherever we are. Our vocation asks that our work be one of liberation, creation, justice, peace, love, and of compassion in a world of sisters and brothers. To call forth life, to build communion, to make peace possible. Convinced that Christ lives in our sisters and brothers, and in a special way in the poor, we are willing to risk a new step forward in salvation history. [IEC: International Education Commission, 1988]  
The Prince of the Peace is born, “Because nothing is impossible for God.” (Luke 1,37)

### *I widen my gaze to mothers given birth in the manger ...*

Estefani was pregnant when she left Venezuela in order to provide adequate care for her baby. Due to the economic and political situation in Venezuela, she could not find the prenatal care she needed during pregnancy. Upon arrival at the border between Venezuela and Colombia, she thought they would be one of few; instead, they became one of the millions making the journey on foot across Colombia.

Afflicted by bad weather and ailing health, Estefani arrived in Ecuador much weaker than anticipated. She had to beg for food, as all her money had been spent on the journey. She was also on her own at this point, because her partner had to continue to Perú for a work commitment. Alone, tired, and hungry, she never imagined that this would be her life. One day while out on the street, she suffered a heart attack. It was a harrowing experience that almost resulted in losing her baby, but she made a full recovery after a few weeks in the hospital. Fortunately, someone at the hospital referred her to Nuestra Señora de la Paz women’s shelter in Quito, where she was able to recover.

A couple of months later, Estefani returned to the hospital to give birth to a healthy baby girl. She plans to continue fighting for the best for her daughter. Estefani encourages other young migrating parents to have courage and practice gratitude along the journey.

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#### *Prayer of Intercession:*

Song - [Adhimi Ya Nafsi, Office of the Nativity of the Christ – Sr Maria Keyrouz \(libanese-melkit\)](#)



#### **Closing prayer**

“Jesus is the name and face of God's love who has come to live among us. May each of you deepen your desire to seek him and the profound joy of meeting him”.

*Pope Francis*

JPIC International Team



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