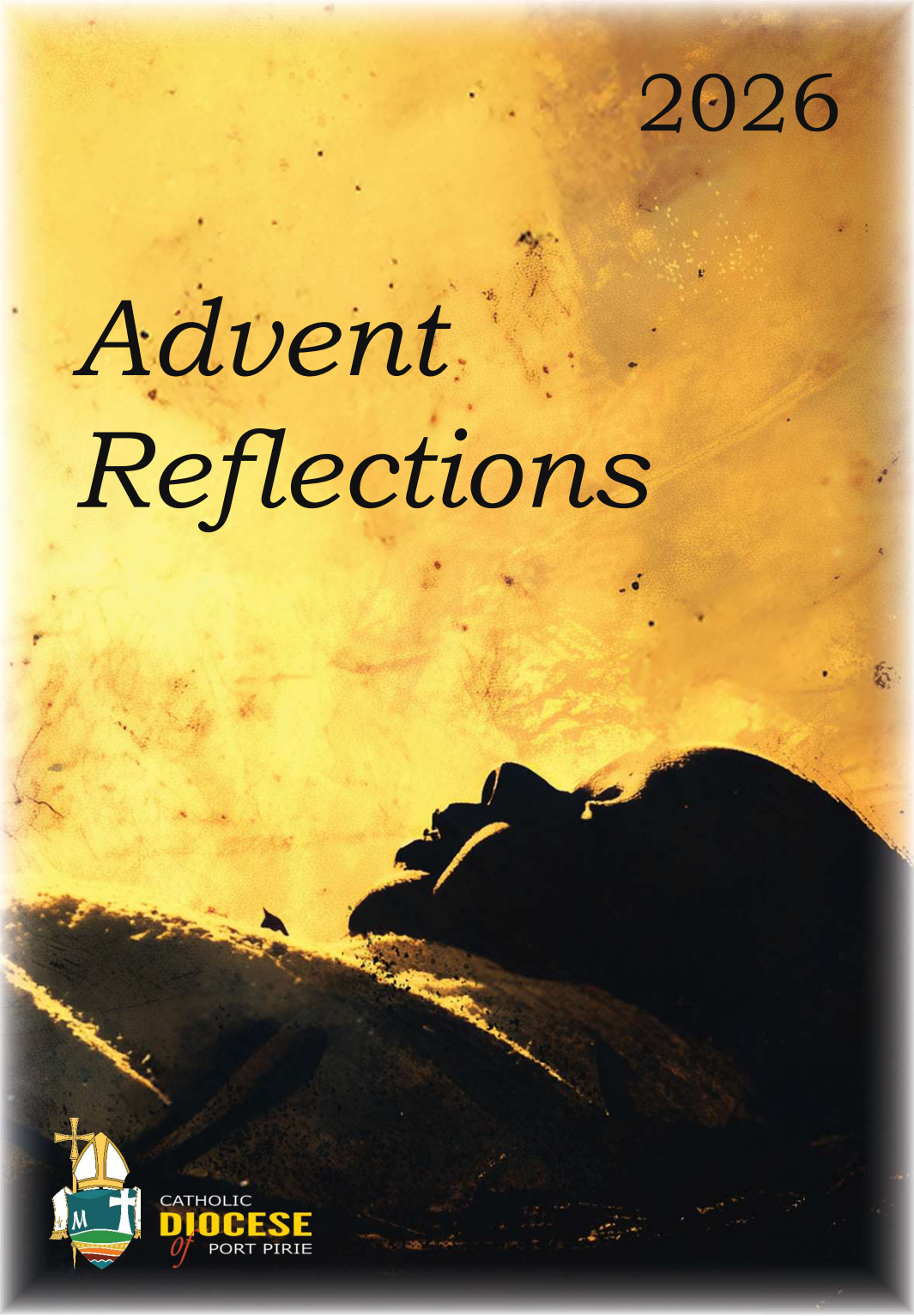
2026

Advent Reflections



CATHOLIC DIOCESE of PORT PIRIE

Acknowledgment of Country:

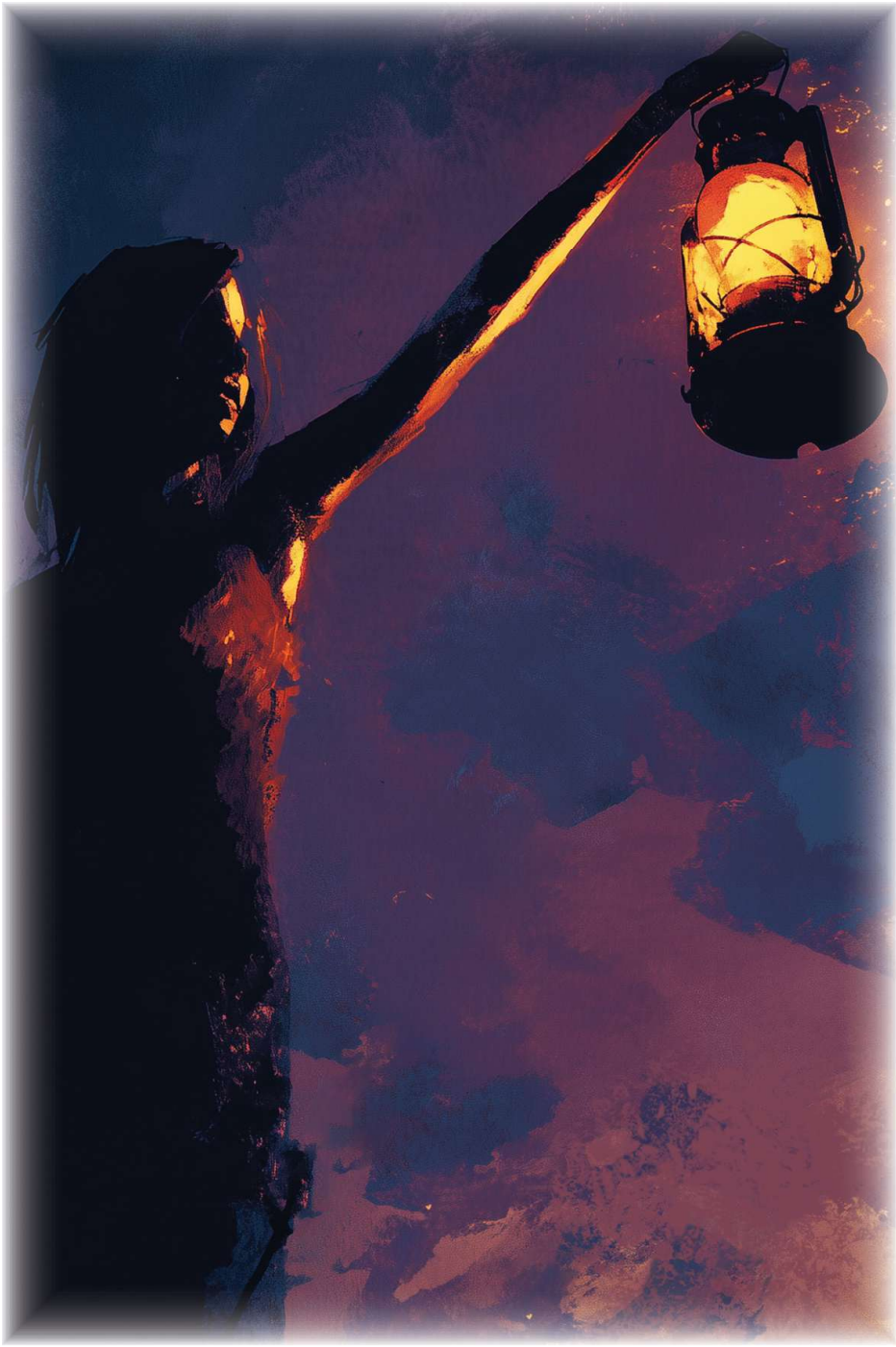
We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia who have walked upon and cared for this land for thousands of years. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future. We honour and acknowledge the continuing deep spiritual relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of reconciliation.

A Word of Introduction:

As Christmas is fast approaching again for another year, we offer you these Advent reflections. We hope that in the busyness of it all you can find some time to slow down and take in what this beautiful Advent season has to offer all of us. Get a group together and gather around the Advent Wreath at your local church in prayer. As you light up the candle(s) each week, it reminds us of the passage of time and that Christ is coming. The songs that we have suggested each week are well-known and so is readily available through various means including As One Voice CDs in your parish. Of course, you may have a particular version of the suggested song that you may like to share with the group from your own sources. This book will also be available online on the diocesan website and will come complete with a video media link each week for those who would like to use the versions of the songs available there.

This year, Pope Leo XIV published his first encyclical, Magnifica Humanitas. It focuses on protecting human dignity in the age of artificial intelligence (AI). The document explores how AI is reshaping work, communication, politics, and warfare, while warning against technologies that reduce people to data or profit-driven systems. Drawing inspiration from Pope Leo XIII's Rerum Novarum, it calls for ethical responsibility, social justice, and international regulation of emerging technologies. Pope Leo XIV emphasizes that innovation must always serve humanity, promoting compassion, truth, solidarity, and the common good rather than domination, inequality, or technological control over human life. The encyclical concludes by offering solutions through Real Relationships, Eucharistic Unity, Love Incarnate, and Marian Hope - these are the four themes for reflection each week throughout Advent.

Please take the time as a group or even by yourself, to reflect on the Gospel each week. We hope that this prayer resource will help guide your prayers this Advent season preparing you for the great solemnity of Jesus' birth. Every blessing to you and yours this Christmas!



1st SUNDAY of ADVENT
- REAL RELATIONSHIPS

Let us gather around the Advent Wreath and light up the first Violet candle. Place ourselves in the presence of God and each other as we make the sign of the cross together.
Please join in singing…

Suggested opening song:
O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Gospel:
Mark 13:33-37

'If he comes unexpectedly, he must not find you asleep'

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Be on your guard, stay awake, because you never know when the time will come. It is like a man travelling abroad: he has gone from home, and left his servants in charge, each with his own task; and he has told the doorkeeper to stay awake. So stay awake, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming, evening, midnight, cockcrow, dawn; if he comes unexpectedly, he must not find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake!'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Reflection:

Real relationships involve being attentive to the other person. While Artificial Intelligence can get in the way of having genuine human encounters with one another, it can happen also whenever we take each other for granted.

Questions for sharing:

1. What word or phrase stands out for you from the Gospel?

2. In what way does technology change the way we interact with each other?

3. How can I make my relationship more real with God and the people in my life?

Responsorial psalm:
Psalm 79 (80): 2-3,15-16,18-19

Response: Lord, make us turn to you;
let us see your face and we shall be saved.

1. O shepherd of Israel, hear us,
shine forth from your cherubim throne.
O Lord, rouse up your might,
O Lord, come to our help. (Response)

2. God of hosts, turn again, we implore,
look down from heaven and see.
Visit this vine and protect it,
the vine your right hand has planted. (Response)

3. May your hand be on the man you have chosen,
the man you have given your strength.
And we shall never forsake you again;
give us life that we may call upon your name. (Response)

Intercessions:

1. We give thanks for all the people in our lives. That the Lord may help us appreciate them and be more attentive to their needs.
Lord hear us.

2. May we follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit to prepare well this Advent.
   Lord hear us.

3. We pray for our parish family, that it will be renewed at the start of this new liturgical year.
   Lord hear us.

4. (Spend a few moments to share your own prayers)…
   Lord hear us

Closing prayer:

Grant your faithful, we pray, almighty God,
the resolve to run forth to meet your Christ with righteous deeds
at his coming, so that, gathered at his right hand,
they may be worthy to possess the heavenly kingdom.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.



2nd SUNDAY of ADVENT - EUCHARISTIC UNITY

Let us gather around the Advent Wreath and light up a second Violet candle. Place ourselves in the presence of God and each other as we make the sign of the cross together.
Please join in singing…

Suggested opening song:
Hark the Herald Angels Sing

Gospel:
Mark 1:1-8
'A voice cries in the wilderness: prepare a way for the Lord'

The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ,
the Son of God.
It is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah:
Look, I am going to send my messenger before you;
he will prepare your way.
A voice cries in the wilderness:
Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight.
And so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. All Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on locusts and wild honey. In the course of his preaching he said, 'Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Reflection:

Today we encounter the austere John the Baptist. He was well aware in his humility that he was not the Messiah and made sure that his whole life pointed towards Jesus. Human beings may think that we are in control of our own destiny until it all goes wrong. We need God and each other as we all make up the Body of Christ through the Eucharist.

Questions for sharing:

1. How do human innovations make us forget about God?

2. How is God calling me to respond to this reality?

3. What does it mean for us to make up the Body of Christ?

Responsorial psalm:
Psalm 84 (85): 9-14

Response: Lord, let us see your kindness,
and grant us your salvation.

1. I will hear what the Lord God has to say,
a voice that speaks of peace, peace for his people.
His help is near for those who fear him
and his glory will dwell in our land. (Response)

2. Mercy and faithfulness have met;
justice and peace have embraced.
Faithfulness shall spring from the earth
and justice look down from heaven. (Response)

3. The Lord will make us prosper
and our earth shall yield its fruit.
Justice shall march before him
and peace shall follow his steps. (Response)

Intercessions:

1. We pray that our goal in life is always directed towards God.
   Lord hear us.

2. That we may find time for rest and recreation these Christmas holidays after a very busy year.
   Lord hear us.

3. We pray that we may be content with all that we have been blessed with and have the courage to let go of things that are not good for us.
   Lord hear us.

4. (Spend a few moments to share your own prayers)…
   Lord hear us

Closing prayer:

Almighty and merciful God,
may no earthly undertaking hinder those
who set out in haste to meet your Son,
but may our learning of heavenly wisdom
gain us admittance to his company.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.



3rd SUNDAY of ADVENT (also Gaudete Sunday) - LOVE INCARNATE

Let us gather around the Advent Wreath once again and light up the Rose candle this week. Place ourselves in the presence of God and each other as we make the sign of the cross together. Please join in singing…

Suggested opening song:
Silent Night

Gospel:
John 1:6-8,19-28
'There stands among you the one coming after me'

A man came, sent by God.
His name was John.
He came as a witness, as a witness to speak for the light, so that everyone might believe through him.
He was not the light,only a witness to speak for the light.
This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' he not only declared, but he declared quite openly, 'I am not the Christ.' 'Well then,' they asked 'are you Elijah?' 'I am not' he said. 'Are you the Prophet?' He answered, 'No.' So they said to him, 'Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?' So John said, 'I am, as Isaiah prophesied: a voice that cries in the wilderness: Make a straight way for the Lord.'
Now these men had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put this further question to him, 'Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the prophet?' John replied, 'I baptise with water; but there stands among you – unknown to you – the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal-strap.' This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptising.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Reflection:

At Christmas, God comes to us as a human child - this is the Incarnation. Love now has a shape and form because God is love. We are all made in the image and likeness of God and so we are also called to give love a shape and form in the way we live our lives just as Jesus has given us an example to follow.

Questions for sharing:

1. What does love look like in the life of Jesus?

2. In what ways can technology dehumanise our society?

3. Are there different types of love? E.g. do I love food the same way I love my spouse?

Responsorial psalm:
Luke: 1:46-50, 53-54

Response: My soul rejoices in my God.

1. My soul glorifies the Lord,
   my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.
   He looks on his servant in her nothingness;
   henceforth all ages will call me blessed. (Response)

2. The Almighty works marvels for me.
   Holy his name!
   His mercy is from age to age,
   on those who fear him. (Response)

3. He fills the starving with good things,
   sends the rich away empty.
   He protects Israel, his servant,
   remembering his mercy. (Response)

Intercessions:

1. May people see the goodness of God from the love we give to others.
   Lord hear us.

2. May our love be seen in the way we serve our brothers and sisters.
   Lord hear us.

3. We pray for the courage to love without seeking anything in return.
   Lord hear us.

4. (Spend a few moments to share your own prayers)…
   Lord hear us

Closing prayer:

O God, who see how your people
faithfully await the feast of the Lord's Nativity,
enable us, we pray,
to attain the joys of so great a salvation
and to celebrate them always
with solemn worship and glad rejoicing.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.



4th SUNDAY of ADVENT - MARIAN HOPE

Let us gather around the Advent Wreath and light up the final Violet candle along with the others. Place ourselves in the presence of God and each other as we make the sign of the cross together.
Please join in singing…

Suggested opening song:
O Come All Ye Faithful

Gospel:
Luke 1:26-38
'I am the handmaid of the Lord'

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?' 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you' the angel answered 'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.' 'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary 'let what you have said be done to me.' And the angel left her.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Reflection:

Mary's trust in God and humility encourages us to always have hope in an uncertain technological age. Rather than succumbing to techno-anxiety or naïve optimism, Christians are challenged to help our community take shape through daily prayer, and human solidarity.

Questions for sharing:

1. How can we ensure that technology is used responsibly?

2. What would it have meant for our world if Mary had not said 'yes' to the angel Gabriel?

3. What are we hearing from the Gospel about what God is calling us to this Advent?

4. How has taking some time to reflect and pray this Advent helped me?

Responsorial psalm:
Psalm 88 (89): 2-5, 27,29

Response: For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

1. I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord;
   through all ages my mouth will proclaim your truth.
   Of this I am sure, that your love lasts for ever,
   that your truth is firmly established as the heavens.
   (Response)

2. 'I have made a covenant with my chosen one;
   I have sworn to David my servant:
   I will establish your dynasty for ever
   and set up your throne through all ages. (Response)

3. 'He will say to me: "You are my father,
   my God, the rock who saves me."
   I will keep my love for him always;
   with him my covenant shall last.' (Response)

Intercessions:

1. We pray for all families who have been doing it tough this year. May the church's effort help lighten their burden and give them hope.
   Lord hear us.

2. May we have the courage to say 'yes' to God as Mary did whenever we hear his voice.
   Lord hear us.

3. That we may always keep Christ in our Christmas celebrations with our family and friends this year.
   Lord hear us.

4. (Spend a few moments to share your own prayers)…
   Lord hear us

Closing prayer:

Having received this pledge of eternal redemption, we pray, almighty God, that, as the feast day of our salvation draws ever nearer, so we may press forward all the more eagerly to the worthy celebration of the mystery of your Son's Nativity.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.

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