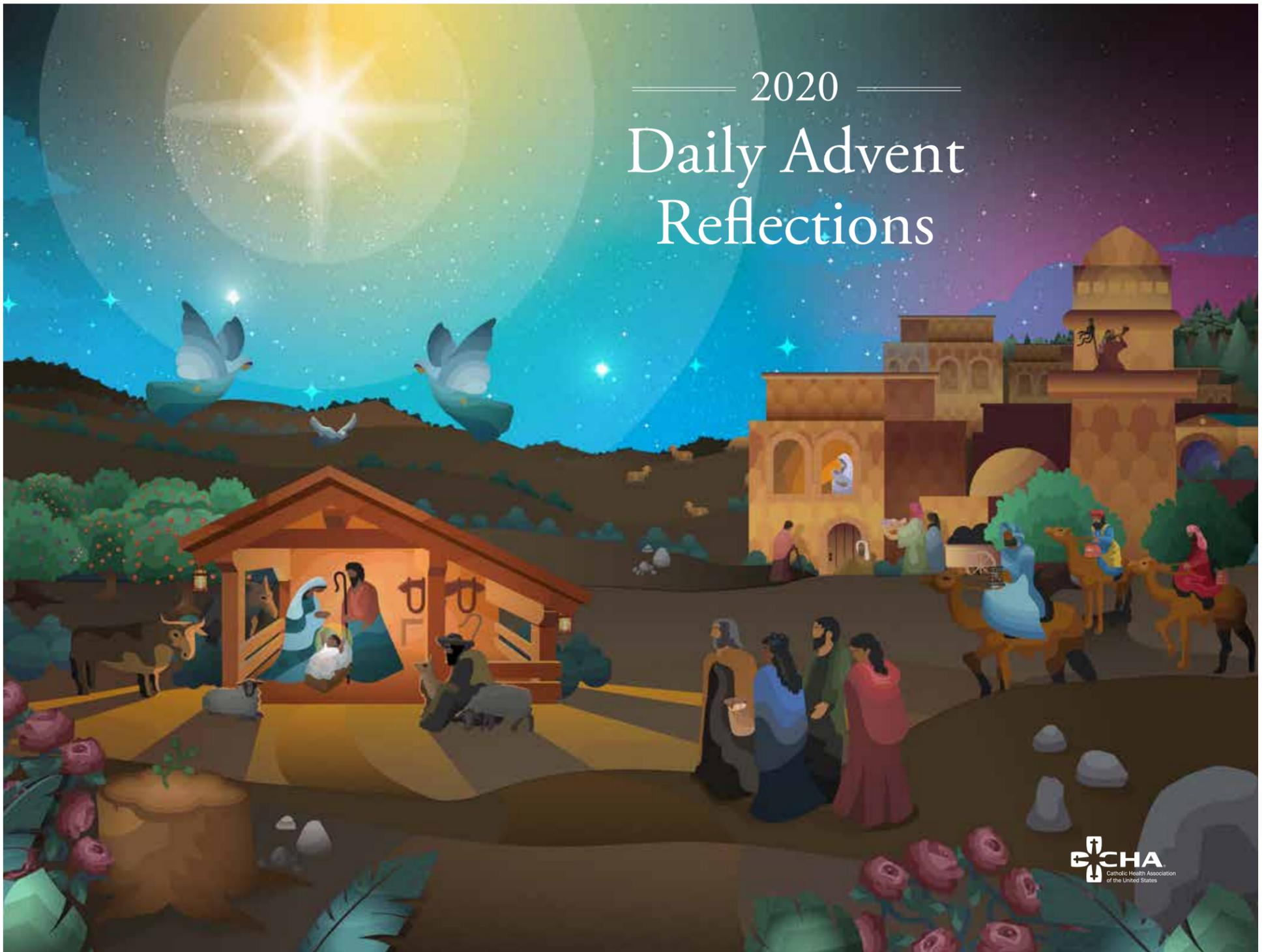


— 2020 —
Daily Advent
Reflections



The Catholic Health Association of the United States wishes you a peace-filled Advent Season and Christmas.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29

Do you see the night watch in the tower?

Can you think of a time when you had to wait for something you really wanted? Not just waiting for a special meal or gift, but a time when you had to wait patiently to feel happy — like waiting to be able to see a long-lost friend or enjoy a celebration. Like then, this is a time to wait patiently for Jesus.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30

Do you see the wise men?

The wise men journeyed for a long time to see Jesus, making their arrival and visit that much more meaningful. What was the most extended road trip you've ever taken? Who did you go to see? What was it like to finally have arrived? What lessons did the journey teach you?

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1

Do you see the stump and the shoot?

The Stump of Jesse reminds us God can begin again with anything. Can you think of something that happened in the past that allowed you to know how to do better here and now? When have you had to begin again on a plan or project? How was the result shaped by restarting?

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2

Do you see the loaves and fishes?

We offer thanks and praise to God for having nourishing and delicious food to eat, but many people, near and far, go hungry in our midst. How can you find ways to share what you have with those who have less?

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3

Do you see the angels?

While it can be difficult, it is good to remember that God is always with us, particularly when we feel sad or lonely. Additionally, we can always call on angels and saints to keep us company. Which saints do you count on as spiritual companions?

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4

Do you see the orchards?

Have you ever tended to a garden? Whether we are planting summer tomatoes or preparing bulbs for spring, we offer love and care in the form of water and sunlight for a successful garden. Then, God takes over and beautiful things grow. Thank God today for the many gifts God offers.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5

Do you see the sheep?

Scripture reminds us often of how Jesus includes and shares with those who are left out. As the Good Shepherd, he seeks even the sheep who are most lost. How can you be more like Jesus today, including those who are left out or forgotten? Who do you need to seek out today?

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6

Do you see the shepherd?

The shepherd and his crooked staff might remind you of sweet peppermint candy canes. They also call to mind the image of God as a tender shepherd who uses his staff's crook to gather the flock closer. Do you feel God pulling you in more closely this Advent season?

MONDAY, DECEMBER 7

Do you see the person on crutches or the one begging?

In today's gospel, the paralytic man is healed when his friends go out of their way to find Jesus. Because of their faith, Jesus heals the man. How would you ask Jesus to heal you today, physically or spiritually? What would you ask him to heal for a friend or loved one?

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8

Do you see the fruits in the orchard?

Can you think of a time when you had to make a difficult choice? God always gives us free will and offers us choices: to be kind or snide, generous or stingy, loving or judgmental. Like Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, the fruits of our lives will depend on which options we consistently choose.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9

Do you see the ox's yoke?

The ox's yoke reminds us that burdens get lighter when we share them with others. Jesus reminds us when we bring him our worries; they lighten even more. God's yoke is easy and his burdens are light. Whose burdens can you share today, and with whom might you share yours?

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10

Do you see the evergreen trees?

Does your family decorate a Christmas tree? What is your favorite part of the tradition? Even if you do not have a tree this year, the evergreen tree remains a powerful image. Its green needles remind us that life is everlasting and God's love is year-round.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11

Do you see the lanterns?

Even in this dark year, where have been your moments of light? Who and what have sustained you, given you hope to carry on? As we remember those who brought forth the light, let us thank God for them and ask that we may be light for others.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12

Do you see the roses?

When Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared to Juan Diego, she looked like a typical indigenous woman he would have encountered in his town in Mexico, so he was not afraid. The story of Our Lady and Juan Diego is special for many reasons but is particularly important because of her familiar appearance. We do not need to be afraid because God and Mother Mary look familiar to us and meet us where we are.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13

Do you see the stars?

Night stars are a marvel. In the image, they sweep across the sky in grandeur, casting their glow over the whole scene. Their light touches everything. The stars and their light remind us that God is always there — even when we experience darkness.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 14

Do you see the wide night sky?

Too often, we equate darkness as negative, lacking or even sinister. Yet, night comes with its own goodness and offers its own gifts. The psalmist sings of the protection and comfort found in the "shadow of the Almighty" (Psalm 91:1). In the shadows of darkness, God waits with us. How is God walking you through the darkness in this season?

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15

Do you see the mother holding her infant?

The Holy Family isn't the only place we see a newborn in the image. The love that surrounds these two infants will be the same. However, Jesus, poor and born in a stable, will have a much different life than the little one sleeping in his mother's arms under a warm roof. How can we see and serve Christ through serving the poor?

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16

Do you see the knapsack full of scrolls?

In Jesus's time, people used scrolls instead of bound books for sacred writings. The scrolls in this bag might contain stories of ancestors or the writings of the prophets. How are the words of scripture leading you this Advent?

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17

Do you see the elders?

Who is the oldest person you know? Have you ever learned an essential lesson from someone older that you would not have learned otherwise? What have you learned as you have grown older? What are the challenges and gifts of your age?

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18

Do you see Joseph?

Joseph did not plan on being Jesus' father, but he took on the role willingly. Families have different configurations, shapes and sizes. Consider all those connected to you through DNA, marriage and other bonds of love and loyalty. How is your family unique?

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19

Do you see the resting lamb?

Lambs are known to be gentle and peaceful animals. The Bible sometimes describes Jesus as a lamb and we often hear that "Jesus is the lamb of God." Why do you think that is? What does it mean that Jesus is both the Lamb of God and the Good Shepherd?

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20

Do you see Mary?

Mary's brave "yes" to the angel's call to be the mother of Jesus allows God to be born into the world in a new and wonderful way. How can you repeat Mary's fiat, her answer of "yes, let it be done to me." How will you let your heart become a dwelling place of God?

MONDAY, DECEMBER 21

Do you see the dove?

Did you notice the dove in the image, circling over the stable? The universal symbol of peace and promise, the dove holds deep cultural meaning. We still yearn for justice in our world in so many ways. As people of God, how are we working for the world around us to know justice and to know peace?

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 22

Do you see the bull?

In the scripture, bulls were sacrificed in gratitude and represented a meaningful change. The birth of Jesus brings about such massive change that we are still living into its meaning thousands of years later. What changes are your faith calling you to make this season?

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 23

Do you see the keystones?

The keystones are at the top of each doorway and window in the image. How many do you see? The keystone provides the tension to stabilize the opening and is a pivot point, the point at which we begin moving a different way. How is Jesus your keystone as both a pivot point and a stabilizing force?

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24

Do you see Jesus?

Consider for a moment, the child in the manger. Our Savior does not come in armor. The child is not arrayed in political power or strength. The might of the Savior is in his vulnerability. Now and at the cross, it will be his vulnerability that will show us how to live, love and be saved. How do you feel God's love for you today?

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25

Do you see what God sees?

Consider for a moment the image in its entirety; see how it is made up of many smaller moments. Imagine what God saw at the moment of the Incarnation. In all of his human uniqueness, Jesus is born to and represents each of us. As God has become one of us, our Christmas joy is that we now draw close to God with our lives.

Enjoy these short daily reflections, take a rest and color the picture on the back. You can access full daily reflections and more at CHAUSA.ORG/ADVENT.