

Benedictine Advent Study Plan (4 Weeks)

Generated by Chatgpt Community Reflection questions edited for CSL

“That in all things God may be glorified” (RB 57:9)

WEEK 1 – Watchfulness and Holy Desire

Theme: *“Awake, sleeper, and rise from the dead”* (Ephesians 5:14)

Benedictine Focus: *Conversatio morum* – continual conversion and readiness of heart.

Primary Scriptures:

- Isaiah 2:1–5 – “Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord.”
- Romans 13:11–14 – “It is time to wake from sleep.”
- Matthew 24:37–44 – “Stay awake!”

Rule of St. Benedict:

- *Prologue* – “Listen carefully, my son...”
- *RB 4* – The tools of good works (esp. “To keep death daily before one’s eyes”).

Monastic Readings:

- St. Bernard of Clairvaux, Portion of his *sermon on the Advents of the Lord*.

<https://www.catholic.org/news/hf/faith/story.php?id=48808>

Practice Focus:

- **Lectio Divina:** Isaiah 2 and RB Prologue daily meditation.
- **Silence:** Extra time in *grand silence* after Compline.
- **Community Reflection:** Where is God calling us to “wake up” as a community?

Suggested Antiphon: *“Come, Lord Jesus, and do not delay.”*

WEEK 2 – Repentance and Purity of Heart

Theme: “*Prepare the way of the Lord.*” (Matthew 3:3)

Benedictine Focus: *Obedient listening and purity of heart* — inner readiness through humility and obedience.

Primary Scriptures:

- Isaiah 11:1–10 – “A shoot shall spring from the stump of Jesse.”
- Matthew 3:1–12 – “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.”
- Romans 15:4–9 – “Live in harmony with one another.”

Rule of St. Benedict:

- *RB 5* – On Obedience.
- *RB 7* – On Humility (steps 1–4).

Monastic Readings:

- St. John Cassian, *Conference 1*, pp. 4 - 23

https://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/0360-0435._Cassianus._The_Conferences_Of_John_Cassian,_EN.pdf

Practice Focus:

- **Lectio Divina:** Psalm 51 and Matthew 3.
- **Fasting:** Reduced speech during work periods.
- **Community Reflection:** How does practicing obedience and humility affect the ministry of this community?

Suggested Antiphon: “*O Root of Jesse, come to deliver us, delay no longer.*”

WEEK 3 – Joy in the Lord’s Nearness (Gaudete)

Theme: “*Rejoice in the Lord always.*” (Philippians 4:4)

Benedictine Focus: Joy as stability in God — rejoicing in simplicity and community charity.

Primary Scriptures:

- Isaiah 35:1–10 – “The desert shall rejoice and bloom.”
- James 5:7–10 – “Be patient... the Lord’s coming is near.”
- Matthew 11:2–11 – “The blind see, the lame walk...”

Rule of St. Benedict:

- *RB Chapters 7* – Humility culminating in perfect love.
- *RB Chapter 49* – On the Observance of Lent (applied to Advent): “Let each one deny himself some food or drink... with joy of the Holy Spirit.”

Monastic Readings:

- St. Benedict of Nursia, *Rule*, ch. 72 – “The Good Zeal of Monks.”

Practice Focus:

- **Lectio Divina:** Philippians 4:4–7 and Luke 1:46–55 (the Magnificat)
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- **Thanksgiving Journal:** Each monk or nun records one “sign of God’s joy” daily.
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- **Community Reflection:** How does this community reflect God’s Joy in the greater world?

Suggested Antiphon: “*O Key of David, come and lead us into freedom.*”

WEEK 4 – Love and the Mystery of the Incarnation

Theme: “*The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.*” (John 1:14)

Benedictine Focus: *Stability and hospitality* — Christ received in our hearts and in one another.

Primary Scriptures:

- Isaiah 7:10–14 – “The virgin shall conceive.”
- Romans 1:1–7 – “The gospel concerning God’s Son.”
- Matthew 1:18–24 – “Joseph did as the angel commanded him.”

Rule of St. Benedict:

- *RB 53* – On the Reception of Guests (“Let all guests be received as Christ”).
- *RB 72* – On the Good Zeal of Monks (“Let them prefer nothing whatever to Christ”).

Monastic Readings:

- St. Leo the Great, *Sermon on the Nativity*.
<https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/360321.htm>

Practice Focus:

- **Lectio Divina:** John 1:1–14 and RB 53.
- **Contemplative Prayer:** Silent adoration of the mystery of Emmanuel.
- **Service:** Acts of hospitality or charity (letters, donations, intercessions).
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- **Community Reflection:** What effect does stability and hospitality have when we are together as a community?

Suggested Antiphon: “*O Emmanuel, our King and Lawgiver, come and save us.*”