

## Prayers for Advent

We wait in the darkness, expectantly, longingly.  
Come, O God Most High.  
In the darkness we can see the splendour  
of the universe – blankets of stars,  
the solitary glowings of the planets.  
Come, O God Most High.  
In the darkness of the womb mortals are  
nurtured  
and the Christ-child was made ready  
for the journey into light.  
Come, O God Most High.  
In the darkness the wise three found the star  
that led them to you.  
Come, O God Most High.  
In the darkness of dreams you spoke to Joseph  
and the wise ones and you speak still to us.  
Come, O God Most High.  
In the darkness of despair and distress we  
watch  
for a sign of hope from the Light of Lights.  
Come, O God Most High.  
(Echoes a Maori prayer. From *Celtic Prayers for Life Today*. Ray Simpson)

The darkest time of the year,  
The poorest place in the town,  
Cold, and a taste of fear,  
Man and woman alone,  
What can we hope for here?

More light than we can learn,  
More wealth than we can treasure,  
More love than we can earn,  
More peace than we can measure,  
Because one Child is born.

– Christopher Fry



# Touchstone

## Prayers for Advent 2019

### Watchful Waiting

The 24 days before Christmas Day in many parts of the world are a time of deep reflection and focus on at least three things.

First, we look back at a dark time in the world when a light shone in the birth of Jesus.

Secondly, we look inward and around us for signs of the presence of Jesus in us and in the world. We also look for places within us that we are not proud of and need correction. We look at the ongoing darkness of our world and how we might be people of hope and healing.

Thirdly, we look forward with watchful anticipation for the final return of Jesus to complete the creation of the new heaven and new earth, for which all creation longs.

In these 24 days we may take some moments to reflect in these three directions. We don't pretend that life is all light and good, but we do see light and good in the world.

I have included a few prayers and reflective patterns for us to use in those quiet moments.

May His peace be yours as you are reminded that Advent and Christmas point to the final triumph of the rule of God over all creation.

**The word Maranatha – “Come Lord Jesus”**  
has been used often in our circles of friends  
to aid in this reflective process. Here are  
some reflective couplets to help us.

Into our memory of the year gone by and our  
hopes and dreams for the next

**Come, Lord Jesus**

To forgive, cleanse and strengthen our lives

**Maranatha**

To help us love you with our whole heart, soul,  
mind and strength

**Come, Lord Jesus**

To help us love our neighbours as ourselves

**Maranatha**

Into our sorrows, grief, pain and confusion

**Come, Lord Jesus**

Into the broken relationships in our lives,  
families, community, country and the world

**Maranatha**

Into our joys, achievements and successes

**Come, Lord Jesus**

As we embark on a new year, not knowing  
what it will bring

**Come, Lord Jesus**

As we live with hope and courage, waiting  
for your return

**Maranatha**

### **A Hope Filled Vision**

Then I saw a new heaven and a new  
earth, for the old heaven and the old earth  
had disappeared. And the sea was also gone.  
And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem,  
coming down from God out of heaven like a  
bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

I heard a loud shout from the throne,  
saying, “Look, God's home is now among his  
people! He will live with them, and they will  
be his people. God himself will be with  
them. He will wipe every tear from their  
eyes, and there will be no more death or  
sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are  
gone forever.”

And the one sitting on the throne said,  
“Look, I am making everything new!” And  
then he said to me, “Write this down, for  
what I tell you is trustworthy and true.” And  
he also said, “It is finished! I am the Alpha  
and the Omega—the Beginning and the End.  
To all who are thirsty I will give freely from  
the springs of the water of life. All who are  
victorious will inherit all these blessings, and  
I will be their God, and they will be my  
children.(Revelation 21:1-7 NLT)

### **Help Even InOur Groaning**

And the Holy Spirit helps us in our  
weakness. For example, we don't know what  
God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit  
prays for us with groanings that cannot be  
expressed in words. And the Father who  
knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is  
saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers  
in harmony with God's own will. And we  
know that God causes everything to work  
together for the good of those who love God  
and are called according to his purpose for  
them. (Romans 8:16-28 NLT)