



An Ignatian Advent Reflection, (based on Luke 1:39–45)

Preparation

Prepare for a period of prayerful meditation by sitting comfortably, closing your eyes, and breathing deeply for a moment or two. Allow any present concerns to move across your mind and wait off to the side for now.

Meeting The “You” of the Future

In your imagination, sit in your favorite room in your home. Imagine you are at your favorite time of day. Around you are items that bring you a sense of peace and comfort —food and drink, or books, pillows, photos, magazines, or projects you enjoy working on. This is a place where you can be busy in quiet ways while your mind and heart do their prayer and meditating. You think about the future, about your loved ones, about plans for you and your family, and about the matters that worry you day to day. In this space, allow all of these thoughts to turn gently into prayer.

Today, though, your heart seems to beat a bit faster than usual. You expect something to happen, but you’re not sure what it is. You know only that it is good, something to anticipate with hope and happiness. As you dwell in your favorite space and do your work, thinking and praying, you feel a positive anticipation growing inside.

Then you feel a gentle breeze, the kind of shift in the air that happens when someone opens a door. You can hear footsteps lightly making their way to you. This is what you’re waiting for! Who will it be? What will be the news? What will happen when you meet who or what is coming?

A light shadow falls across the open doorway, and you look up. Your heart beats faster, and when you recognize the face and form, your breath catches. This can’t be happening—is it possible?

The person you see is . . . **you**. You have entered the room, and your smile glows. You look at yourself and know that this is a holy moment, because you are given the ability to see something about your own present and future. The you who has entered comes over to the you who is seated, and your eyes meet. You feel a vibration of joy in the room. You behold your own face glowing with deepening faith and growing contentment.

You realize then, that **you** have come with news about a wonderful gift you have for the world this Advent. It is a gift that God has been forming in your life for many years. And in the not-so-distant future you will be asked to share this gift to the world, to help God’s kingdom become real on earth.

As the two of you—the two “**yous**”—draw closer, you listen for news of this gift. What do you possess that God is preparing for others? How are you being invited to be part of the plan of God’s love in the world this Advent? What do you see in yourself that God is preparing for the world to know and appreciate? How can you be truly grateful? How can you share this unique gift in yourself during this grand Christmas celebration?

When you have learned what you are able to see today, pray your Concluding Prayer:

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

A Holy Christmas to you and for all with whom you share God’s care!