

Advent 2024 Reflections/Action Steps (Week Four)

Pilgrims of Hope

This Advent, we journey as “Pilgrims of Hope,” guided by the Beatitudes and inspired by Pope Francis’ vision of hope. As we navigate a world often shadowed by uncertainty, our calendar invites us to look beyond darkness and discover signs of grace and renewal. Each day will be an opportunity to reflect on Christ’s teachings, recognize hope in unexpected places, and learn how we can become bearers of God’s compassionate light. Through the Beatitudes, we’ll explore how simple acts of mercy, peacemaking, and love can transform our hearts and our world, preparing us to welcome the ultimate hope of Christ’s coming.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.” (cf. Mt 5:9)

Sunday, December 22, 2024

O King of All Nations

Fr. Richard Rohr: *John Dear, an internationally known voice for peace and nonviolence, says that as Christians, “We cannot support war, participate in war, pay for war, promote war, or wage war.” It is our responsibility to work to “end war and create peace . . . to be a peacemaker.” [2] How can we be peacemakers? It begins by being peace ourselves, by connecting with the source of peace within. It means standing up in nonviolent resistance to systems of injustice. It involves learning the skills of nonviolent communication and conflict resolution.* <https://cac.org/daily-meditations/blessed-are-the-peacemakers-2018-02-06/>

Action Step: Visit Pax Christi USA and learn about their peacemaking efforts.

**“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (cf. Mt 5:10)**

Monday, December 23, 2024

O Emmanuel

Pope Francis: *Jesus himself warns us that the path he proposes goes against the flow, even making us challenge society by the way we live and, as a result, becoming a nuisance. He reminds us how many people may have been, and still are, persecuted simply because they struggle for justice, because they take seriously their commitment to God and to others. Unless we wish to sink into an obscure mediocrity, let us not long for an easy life, for “whoever would save his life will lose it” (Mt 16:25). (Guadete et Exsultate 90)*

Action Step: Donate to an organization that supports and advocates for those facing persecution around the world, such as Amnesty International or Human Rights Watch.

The Jubilee Year will begin with the opening of the Holy Door of St. Peter’s Basilica on Christmas Eve 2024.



Tuesday, December 24, 2024

Pope Francis: *The coming Jubilee will thus be a Holy Year marked by the hope that does not fade, our hope in God. May it help us to recover the confident trust that we require, in the Church and in society, in our interpersonal relationships, in international relations, and in our task of promoting the dignity of all persons and respect for God’s gift of creation. May the witness of believers be for our world a leaven of authentic hope, a harbinger of new heavens and a new earth (cf. 2 Pet 3:13), where men and women will dwell in justice and harmony, in joyful expectation of the fulfilment of the Lord’s promises. (Spes non Confundit 25)*

Action Step: Reflect on your Advent journey. How have you brought hope to others? How have you experienced God's love and mercy?

Wednesday, December 25, 2024

Pope Francis: *Let us even now be drawn to this hope! Through our witness, may hope spread to all those who anxiously seek it. May the way we live our lives say to them in so many words: "Hope in the Lord! Hold firm, take heart and hope in the Lord!" (Ps 27:14). May the power of hope fill our days, as we await with confidence the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and glory, now and forever. (Spes non Confundit 25)*

Wishing you a blessed Christmas season and a year filled with hope!