



PREPARE *Your Heart*

2023 ADVENT JOURNAL
FOR CATHOLIC MOMS

A Catholic Mom Calm Journal



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It is with great joy and prayer that we give you this journal to accompany you as we journey together in preparing our hearts to welcome our Lord this Christmas.

Advent is about awaiting the Lord. We are always called to be ready for His second coming. So as we prepare for Christmas, we too are preparing our hearts and souls for His coming, which could be any time.

We hope that this series and journal will be a blessing in your life and will help you experience the peace and joy God desires for you.

Each day has a short scripture passage to read along with a journal prompt. We will also be posting daily reflections on the Catholic Mom Daily podcast. I encourage you to listen to those before you journal.

Please know that we are so grateful for you. We are praying for you and we are excited to enter into this journey of drawing closer to our Lord with you.

Together, may we seek more peace, receive the peace that God wants to give us and bring more peace into this world that so desperately needs it.

In Christ,

Sterling

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3RD

"You, LORD, are our father, our redeemer you are named forever. Why do you let us wander, O LORD, from your ways, and harden our hearts so that we fear you not? Return for the sake of your servants, the tribes of your heritage. Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down, with the mountains quaking before you, while you wrought awesome deeds we could not hope for, such as they had not heard of from of old. No ear has ever heard, no eye ever seen, any God but you doing such deeds for those who wait for him. Would that you might meet us doing right, that we were mindful of you in our ways! Behold, you are angry, and we are sinful; all of us have become like unclean people, all our good deeds are like polluted rags; we have all withered like leaves, and our guilt carries us away like the wind. There is none who calls upon your name, who rouses himself to cling to you; for you have hidden your face from us and have delivered us up to our guilt. Yet, O LORD, you are our father; we are the clay and you the potter: we are all the work of your hands."

What are you still trying to do on your own? Where do you have an ungodly self-reliance?

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, leaving small margins at the top and bottom. There are no vertical margin lines, text, or other markings on the page.

Pray for the Gift of Fortitude

MONDAY, DECEMBER 4TH

Read: Matthew 8:5-11

When Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion approached him and appealed to him, saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, suffering dreadfully." He said to him, "I will come and cure him." The centurion said in reply, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you enter under my roof; only say the word and my servant will be healed. For I too am a man subject to authority, with soldiers subject to me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come here,' and he comes; and to my slave, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard this, he was amazed and said to those following him, "Amen, I say to you, in no one in Israel have I found such faith. I say to you, many will come from the east and the west, and will recline with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the banquet in the Kingdom of heaven."

Reflect:

The Lord has authority over us. He can do anything. Why do you not trust Him to take care of you?

[illegible]

Let Us Be Childlike
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5TH

Read: Luke 10:21-24

Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "I give you praise, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned, you have revealed them to the childlike. Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him."

Turning to the disciples in private he said, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. For I say to you, many prophets and kings desired to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it."

Reflect:

Children naturally trust adults to take care of them, that everything will be okay. What would it look like to have childlike trust that your Father will take care of you now?

[illegible]

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6TH

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Bitterness Keeps Us From God

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7TH

Read: Matthew 7:21, 24-27

Jesus said to his disciples: "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the Kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven.

Everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. But it did not collapse; it had been set solidly on rock. And everyone who listens to these words of mine but does not act on them will be like a fool who built his house on sand. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. And it collapsed and was completely ruined."

Reflect:

Be honest with yourself. What anger and bitterness is keeping you from the Lord?

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We Exist for the Praise of His Glory

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8TH

Read: Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-2

Brothers and sisters: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavens, as he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and without blemish before him. In love, he destined us for adoption to himself through Jesus Christ, in accord with the favor of his will, for the praise of the glory of his grace that he granted us in the beloved.

In him, we were also chosen, destined in accord with the purpose of the One who accomplishes all things according to the intention of his will, so that we might exist for the praise of his glory, we who first hoped in Christ.

Reflect:

God made you for a purpose and to exist for the praise of His glory. In what ways are you being distracted from your purpose and from praising Him?

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Do You Feel Troubled and Abandoned?

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9TH

Read: Matthew 9:35-10:1, 5-8

Jesus went around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom, and curing every disease and illness. At the sight of the crowds, his heart was moved with pity for them because they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest."

Then he summoned his Twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits to drive them out and to cure every disease and every illness.

Jesus sent out these Twelve after instructing them thus, "Go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As you go, make this proclamation: 'The Kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, drive out demons. Without cost you have received; without cost you are to give."

Reflect:

If you feel troubled and abandoned, consider, are you letting the Shepherd herd you to safety or have you wandered off?

God Is Outside of Time

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10TH

Read: 2 Peter 3:8-14

Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one day. The Lord does not delay his promise, as some regard 'delay,' but he is patient with you, not wishing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a mighty roar and the elements will be dissolved by fire, and the earth and everything done on it will be found out.

Since everything is to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be, conducting yourselves in holiness and devotion, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved in flames and the elements melted by fire. But according to his promise, we await new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, since you await these things, be eager to be found without spot or blemish before him, at peace.

Reflect:

We think that things are too slow but God is outside of time. How can you trust that His timing is best?

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Surrender Is an Active Emotion

MONDAY, DECEMBER 11TH

Read: Luke 5:17-26

One day as Jesus was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and Jerusalem, were sitting there, and the power of the Lord was with him for healing. And some men brought on a stretcher a man who was paralyzed; they were trying to bring him in and set him in his presence. But not finding a way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on the stretcher through the tiles into the middle in front of Jesus. When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "As for you, your sins are forgiven."

Then the scribes and Pharisees began to ask themselves, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who but God alone can forgive sins?" Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them in reply, "What are you thinking in your hearts? Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"- he said to the one who was paralyzed, "I say to you, rise, pick up your stretcher, and go home."

He stood up immediately before them, picked up what he had been lying on, and went home, glorifying God. Then astonishment seized them all and they glorified God, and, struck with awe, they said, "We have seen incredible things today."

Reflect:

Surrender doesn't mean sitting around doing nothing. We must work and trust. How can you more deeply surrender something you're going through while also taking action?

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TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12TH

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13TH

When we resist Jesus or work against Him, the burden feels heavy and hard. How can you work with the Lord so that the yoke is easy and the burden is light?

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I Will Answer Them. God Will Do the Work.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14TH

Read: Isaiah 41:13-20

I am the LORD, your God, who grasps your right hand; It is I who say to you, 'Fear not, I will help you.' Fear not, O worm Jacob, O maggot Israel; I will help you, says the LORD; your redeemer is the Holy One of Israel. I will make of you a threshing sledge, sharp, new, and double-edged, To thresh the mountains and crush them, to make the hills like chaff. When you winnow them, the wind shall carry them off and the storm shall scatter them. But you shall rejoice in the LORD, and glory in the Holy One of Israel.

The afflicted and the needy seek water in vain, their tongues are parched with thirst. I, the LORD, will answer them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. I will open up rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the broad valleys; I will turn the desert into a marshland, and the dry ground into springs of water. I will plant in the desert the cedar, acacia, myrtle, and olive; I will set in the wasteland the cypress, together with the plane tree and the pine, That all may see and know, observe and understand, That the hand of the LORD has done this, the Holy One of Israel has created it.

Reflect:

Sit and pray, "Lord, please answer me." And then really expect an answer. Write down what you hear. Spend all day listening in your heart.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

You Are Like Children in the Marketplace

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15TH

Read: Matthew 11:16-19

Jesus said to the crowds: "To what shall I compare this generation? It is like children who sit in marketplaces and call to one another, 'We played the flute for you, but you did not dance, we sang a dirge but you did not mourn.' For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they said, 'He is possessed by a demon.' The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they said, 'Look, he is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.' But wisdom is vindicated by her works."

Reflect:

How are you acting in a childish way about your problems right now? What is more mature and virtuous response that you could have?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins or other markings on the paper.

Let Us See Your Face and We Shall Be Saved

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16TH

Read: Ps 80:2,4, 15-16, 18-20

O Shepherd of Israel, lend an ear, you who guide Joseph like a flock! O God, restore us; light up your face and we shall be saved. Turn back again, God of hosts; look down from heaven and see; Visit this vine, the stock your right hand has planted, and the son whom you made strong for yourself. May your hand be with the man on your right, with the son of man whom you made strong for yourself. Then we will not withdraw from you; revive us, and we will call on your name.

LORD God of hosts, restore us; light up your face and we shall be saved.

Reflect:

When we feel ashamed, we hide from the Lord. How can you ask for forgiveness and turn your face to Him to find salvation?

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17TH

I rejoice heartily in the LORD, in my God is the joy of my soul; for he has clothed me with a robe of salvation and wrapped me in a mantle of justice, like a bridegroom adorned with a diadem, like a bride bedecked with her jewels. As the earth brings forth its plants, and a garden makes its growth spring up, so will the Lord GOD make justice and praise spring up before all the nations.

Do you believe that God can heal your broken heart? How can you be more open to this healing?

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a template for handwriting practice or general writing. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.

God Spoke to Joseph in a Dream

MONDAY, DECEMBER 18TH

Read: Matthew 1:18-25

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the Holy Spirit. Joseph, her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet:

"Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means "God is with us." When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home. He had no relations with her until she bore a son, and he named him Jesus.

Reflect:

The Lord speaks to us in many ways. Is your heart open to hear Him? What have you already heard Him tell you?

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19TH

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20TH

The earth is the LORD's and all it holds, the world and those who dwell in it. For he founded it on the seas, established it over the rivers. Who may go up the mountain of the LORD? Who can stand in his holy place? "The clean of hand and pure of heart, who has not given his soul to useless things, what is vain. He will receive blessings from the LORD, and justice from his saving God. Such is the generation that seeks him, that seeks the face of the God of Jacob."

There are many ways we keep the Lord on the outside of certain areas of our lives. How can you invite Him more fully into a difficult part of your life?

[illegible]

Blessed Are You Who Believed

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21ST

Read: Luke 1:39-45

Mary set out in those days and traveled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, "Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled."

Reflect:

What has the Lord spoken to you? Do you believe what you have heard?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins or other markings on the paper.

He Has Scattered the Proud in Their Conceit

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22ND

Read: Luke 1:46-56

"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my savior. For he has looked upon his lowly servant. From this day, all generations will call me blessed: the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name. He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation. He has shown the strength of his arm and has scattered the proud in their conceit. He has cast down the mighty from their thrones and has lifted up the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has come to the help of his servant Israel, for he remembered his promise of mercy, the promise he made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children for ever."

Mary remained with Elizabeth about three months and then returned to her home.

Reflect:

When we feel scattered, it can often be rooted in pridefulness. In what ways might your pridefulness be keeping you in a scattered state?

This image shows a full page of blank handwriting practice paper. It features multiple sets of three horizontal lines each, creating rows for letter formation. Each row consists of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line. The rows are evenly spaced across the entire page, providing a guide for letter height and placement. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23RD

When the time arrived for Elizabeth to have her child, she gave birth to a son. Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy toward her, and they rejoiced with her. When they came on the eighth day to circumcise the child, they were going to call him Zechariah after his father, but his mother said in reply, "No. He will be called John." But they answered her, "There is no one among your relatives who has this name." So they made signs, asking his father what he wished him to be called. He asked for a tablet and wrote, "John is his name," and all were amazed. Immediately his mouth was opened, his tongue freed, and he spoke blessing God. Then fear came upon all their neighbors, and all these matters were discussed throughout the hill country of Judea. All who heard these things took them to heart, saying, "What, then, will this child be? For surely the hand of the Lord was with him."

God loves you so much. He put so much care into when you were born and all the gifts and crosses you would receive. How does this make you feel?

This image shows a full page of blank handwriting practice paper. It features multiple sets of horizontal lines, each consisting of three parallel lines: two outer lines and a central midline. These sets are repeated down the entire length of the page, providing a guide for letter height and placement. The background is white, and the lines are a light gray or blue color. There is no text or other markings on the page.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24TH

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on the right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 25TH

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