



MARY'S



TREASURE



AN ADVENT
ART CONTEMPLATION

Dear Prayer Companion,

This art contemplation takes you back to Jesus' birth mother Mary's experience around the birth of Jesus.

About Mary

Mary was a young, (about 13-year-old) Galilean Jewish girl living in the 1st century BC Israel.

What is Advent?

Advent is a Latin word and means "arrival" or "coming". Christians around the world spend the four weeks before Christmas on (spiritual) preparation and anticipation of the celebration of Jesus' birth, and its significance to their lives. How might God be inviting you to engage in the anticipation of the coming of God's Kingdom this Advent season? What practices or rituals might help you to do this?

Art Contemplation or "Visio Divina"

Visio Divina, aka holy seeing, is a way to pray with the eyes. Through this prayer practice we seek to see what God sees in the image and what he wants to show us through it.

Preparation for Prayer

Start your prayer by reading the text, Luke 1:25-56 - 2:1-21 in its totality. Then put it aside and pause. Become aware of God and his loving gaze on you. Set aside things that occupy your mind and heart. Offer a short prayer of openness and desire to be with God. Invite the Holy Spirit to speak to you. You may want to light a candle at this point to express your desire for the companionship of God's light.

Gazing the Image

Reflectively look at the art print on the next page. Seek to see what God sees in the image. Allow yourself to be immersed in the image. Observe your reactions and what stirs in you; memories, emotions, likes, dislikes, curiosity, wonder, questions, and insights. Do not rush. Reflect on the questions provided below the image.

Closing Prayer and Journaling

Respond to God about what you saw and sensed during the gazing at the image. As you do this, talk to God openly as to a trusted friend, and seek to hear what he wants to say to you. Finally, you might wish to write down some of your experience of the prayer.



"MARY TREASURED UP ALL THESE THINGS AND PONDERED THEM IN HER HEART."



Reflection

Look at the image of Mary, a teenage mother, just a few moments after having given birth to her son Jesus.

Now, imagine Mary thinking back to the events of the past several months, while looking at her baby sleeping in a manger, in a dark, dusty stable. Stay with her in that moment. What is it like?

What do you think Mary is feeling?

What might she be thinking to herself, or saying to God in the quiet of her heart?

What emotions are stirred within you?

Look back to your past year. What treasures do you find? How have you received God's favor, blessing, protection, and salvation this year?

Is there a connection between Mary's treasure and yours?

How do you want to respond to God?

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