

ADVENT *and*
CHRISTMAS
WISDOM
— *from* —
SAINT FRANCIS
OF ASSISI

Daily Scripture and Prayers
Together With
Saint Francis of Assisi's Own Words

Compiled by John V. Kruse, PhD



Liguori

LIGUORI, MISSOURI

Imprimi Potest:
Thomas D. Picton, C.Ss.R.
Provincial, Denver Province
The Redemptorists

Published by Liguori
Liguori, Missouri
To order, call 800-325-9521
www.liguori.org

Compilation, Prayer, and Action © 2008 by John V. Kruse

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other—except for brief quotations in printed reviews, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Advent and Christmas wisdom from Saint Francis of Assisi : daily Scripture and prayers together with Saint Francis of Assisi's own words / compiled by John V. Kruse. — 1st ed.

p. cm.

ISBN 978-0-7648-1756-4

1. Advent—Prayers and devotions. 2. Christmas—Prayers and devotions.
3. Catholic Church—Prayers and devotions. I. Francis, of Assisi, Saint, 1182-1226. II. Kruse, John V.
BX2170.A4A36 2008
242'.33—dc22

2008027352

Texts from Francis of Assisi: Early Documents, Volume 1: The Saint are used with permission. (Copyright 1999, 2000, 2001 Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure, NY. Published by New City Press, 202 Cardinal Rd., Hyde Park, NY 12538 [www.newcitypress.com]).

The English translation of the Confiteor from *The Roman Missal* © 1973, International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc. (ICEL); excerpts from the English translation of *The Liturgy of the Hours* © 1974, ICEL. All rights reserved.

Scripture citations are taken from the *New Revised Standard Version Bible*, copyright 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

The English translation of the Canticle of Simeon by the International Consultation on English Texts.

Printed in the United States of America
17 16 15 14 13 7 6 5 4 3

Contents

Introduction

~ ix ~

How to Use This Book

~ x ~

Part I

Readings for Advent

~ 1 ~

Part II

Readings for the Christmas Season

~ 63 ~

Part III

Formats for Evening Prayer

~ 95 ~





DAY 1

The Will of God

Most High,
glorious God,
enlighten the darkness of my heart
and give me
true faith,
certain hope,
and perfect charity,
sense and knowledge,
Lord,
that I may carry out
Your holy and true command.

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI,
“THE PRAYER BEFORE THE CRUCIFIX,” 40

LET IT BE

The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. . . . Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

LUKE 1:30-31, 34-38

PRAYER

Lord, being a Christian means that I am called to live a life that involves a degree of uncertainty. Like Mary, I am unsure what your call will require of me in the next moment, tomorrow, or many years from now. Strengthen my trust in you so that I may be your faithful servant in the world.



ADVENT ACTION

We are often surrounded with much noise that drowns out the voice of God in our lives. Create an environment in which to listen to God speaking to you, so that you may better follow his will in your life. When in the car or when in your home, allow yourself a period of silence by not turning on the radio, stereo, or television.





DAY 5

Forgiveness

Forgive us our trespasses
through Your ineffable mercy
through the power of the passion of Your beloved Son
and through the merits and intercession of the ever
blessed Virgin and all Your elect.

Mt 6:12

As we forgive those who trespass against us
And what we do not completely forgive,
make us, Lord, forgive completely
that we may truly love our enemies because of You
and we may fervently intercede for them before You,
returning no evil for evil
and may we strive to help everyone in You.

Mt 6:12

1 Thes 5:15

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI,
“A PRAYER INSPIRED BY THE OUR FATHER,” 159

FORGIVING AS GOD FORGIVES

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful.

COLOSSIANS 3:12-15

PRAYER

Forgiving God, the expectations and pressures that often accompany this holy season sometimes lead old hurts and grudges to surface and new ones to appear. Letting go of hurts can be one of the most difficult things to do in life. May I seek to forgive as you forgive, for in forgiveness comes healing.

ADVENT ACTION

Forgiving doesn't necessarily mean forgetting, but it does mean letting go of the grudge and animosity that you hold over another. What relationship in your life is in need of healing? Let go of a grudge today and do something concrete to extend a hand of reconciliation.



DAY 7

The Power of Words

Let all the brothers be careful not to slander or engage in disputes; let them strive, instead, to keep silence whenever God gives them the grace. Let them not quarrel among themselves or with others but strive to respond humbly, saying: *I am a useless servant....*

2 Tm 2:14

Lk 17:10

Let them revile no one. Let them not grumble or detract from others, for it is written: *Gossips and detractors are detestable to God.* Let them be *modest by showing graciousness toward everyone.* Let them not judge or condemn.

Ti 3:2

Rom 1:29-30

Ti 3:2

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI, *THE EARLIER RULE*,
(XI: THE BROTHERS SHOULD NOT REVILE OR DETRACT,
BUT SHOULD LOVE ONE ANOTHER), 72

PROPER USE OF THE TONGUE

*Rash words are like sword thrusts,
but the tongue of the wise brings healing.
Truthful lips endure for ever,
but a lying tongue lasts only a moment.*

PROVERBS 12:18-19

PRAYER

Word Made Flesh, I can use my tongue to build up or to tear down. Give me the gift of your wisdom so that I might choose my words wisely and know when it is best to hold my tongue. May my words encourage, inspire, and heal, rather than wound.

ADVENT ACTIVITY

Practice the art of holding your tongue. Make a conscious effort to think before you speak. When tempted to make a biting comment, instead say nothing. Let someone else have the last word in a conversation, argument, or disagreement.