

Wednesday, December 7th, Day 11 – Kevin McIlroy

(Welcome)

Hello, and welcome to Vespers for the Advent season. My name is Kevin McIlroy, and today is the 11th day of Advent, Wednesday, December 7th.

(Centering)

As we begin our time of reflection and devotion, let's take a moment to center ourselves.

Make sure other distractions are quieted for the next few minutes.

If possible, bring your body to complete rest.

As you become aware of the stillness around you, focus on your breathing as we inhale and exhale slowly together.

Breathe in, exhale.

Breathe in, exhale.

Breathe in, exhale.

(Responsive Prayer)

As we continue in prayer together, speak the words of this responsive prayer.

LEADER – God of love

RESPONSE – May this season remind us of your steadfastness

LEADER – Christ of hope

RESPONSE – May this season remind us of your promises

LEADER – Spirit of peace

RESPONSE – May this season remind us of your comfort

LEADER – As it was from the beginning,

RESPONSE – So now, may the joy of this season burn in our hearts

TOGETHER – Amen

(Lectio Divina) For the next few moments, let's dwell in God's Word.

Our reading today comes from the Gospel of John, Chapter 15.

I will read the passage through 3 times - each time with a different way for you to experience the scripture.

(1st Reading)

Hear the Word of God

- 9 As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love.
- 10 If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.
- 11 I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.
- 12 "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.
- 13 No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.
- 14 You are my friends if you do what I command you.
- 15 I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing, but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father.
- 16 You did not choose me, but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name.
- 17 I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

(After 1st Reading Prompt)

As we read through the 2nd time, take notice of what word or phrase stands out to you and hold onto it. If you would like to write your reflections down or tell someone else your findings, feel free to pause the video after this 2nd reading.

Passage Repeated

(After 2nd Reading Prompt)

If a word or phrase caught your attention, what, if anything, do you sense God saying to you about the LOVE that Advent brings? Listen for that invitation during this final reading. If you would like to write your reflections down or tell someone else your findings, feel free to pause the video after this 3rd reading.

Passage Repeated

(After 3rd Reading Prompt)

As we conclude this time of reading together, let me offer this question as a challenge to be aware of as you go about your Advent season:

How does it feel when you're included or chosen for a special purpose?

What part does LOVE play in God choosing to come to us the way God did?

(Benediction)

Thank you for spending time with us today. As you continue this week, may the LOVE of the Advent resound in every part of your life. If you will, speak these words with me as we conclude:

ALL – Lord of hosts,
 Who breathed the words of creation and
 spoke the Word of the Incarnation
Ignite our imaginations
Fill us with awe and wonder
Prepare the way for the Messiah, within and without
For unto us, a Child is born
Unto us, Emmanuel is given
Bring us Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace
As we receive, once again, Your greatest gift to the world
Amen, and amen

(Conclusion)

Join us every day of Advent for a time of reflection and devotion.
May God go with you through this season of LOVE.
Blessings, dearly beloved.