

Saturday, December 17th, Day 21 – Marla Finley

(Welcome)

Hello, and welcome to Vespers for the Advent season. My name is Marla Finley, and today is the 21st day of Advent, Saturday, December 17th.

(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 Psalms, Chapter 16.

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

1 Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge.

2 I say to the Lord, "You are my Lord;

I have no good apart from you."

5 The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup;
you hold my lot.

6 The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;
I have a goodly heritage.

7 I bless the Lord, who gives me counsel;
in the night also my heart instructs me.

8 I keep the Lord always before me;
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices;
my body also rests secure.

(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 JOY 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 is repeated

(After 3rd Reading Prompt)

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

How have the “boundary lines” fallen in pleasant places in your life?

What JOY from the Advent makes your heart glad and your body rest secure?

(Benediction)

Thank you for spending time with us today. As you continue this week, may the JOY 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 JOY.
Blessings, dearly beloved.