

# Praying in The Dark

*an Advent prayer service*



## Lighting of Advent Candles

### Santa Lucia in Swedish

St. Lucy, third-century Sicilian girl who pledged her virginity to Christ and endured a martyr's death when she refused to renounce her faith, ***pray for us.***

## Song 1

### *When The Night Becomes Dark*- Taize

When the night becomes dark,  
Your love, O Lord, is a fire;  
Your love, O Lord, is a fire.

## Invitations and Introductions / Shared Reflection

How does darkness impact your spirit this time of year?

## Reading 1

**The Dark Night of the Soul**  
Cross

by St John of the

On a dark night,  
Kindled in love with yearnings—oh, happy chance!—  
I went forth without being observed,  
My house being now at rest.

In darkness and secure,  
By the secret ladder, disguised—oh, happy chance!—  
In darkness and in concealment,  
My house being now at rest.

In the happy night,  
In secret, when none saw me,  
Nor I beheld aught,

Without light or guide, save that which burned in  
my heart.

This light guided me  
More surely than the light of noonday  
To the place where he (well I knew who!) was awaiting  
me-  
A place where none appeared.

Oh, night that guided me,  
Oh, night more lovely than the dawn,  
Oh, night that joined Beloved with lover,  
Lover transformed in the Beloved!

Upon my flowery breast,  
Kept wholly for himself alone,  
There he stayed sleeping, and I caressed him,  
And the fanning of the cedars made a breeze.

The breeze blew from the turret  
As I parted his locks;  
With his gentle hand he wounded my neck  
And caused all my senses to be suspended.

I remained, lost in oblivion;  
My face I reclined on the Beloved.  
All ceased and I abandoned myself,  
Leaving my cares forgotten among the lilies.

## Silent Reflection

*If I say, "Surely darkness shall hide me,  
and night shall be my light" —  
Darkness is not dark for you,  
and night shines as the day.  
Darkness and light are but one.  
(Psalm 139:11-12)*

## Reading 2

### **Sweet Darkness**

by David Whyte

When your eyes are tired  
the world is tired also.

When your vision has gone,  
no part of the world can find you.

Time to go into the dark  
where the night has eyes  
to recognize its own.

There you can be sure  
you are not beyond love.

The dark will be your home  
tonight.

The night will give you a horizon

further than you can see.

You must learn one thing.  
The world was made to be free in.

Give up all the other worlds  
except the one to which you belong.

Sometimes it takes darkness and the sweet  
confinement of your aloneness  
to learn

anything or anyone  
that does not bring you alive

is too small for you.

## **Silent Reflection**

### **Song 2**

**"Holy Darkness" by Daniel L. Schutte**

### **Reading 3**

from Parker Palmer, ["Darkness Can Be a Teacher"](#)

*"So perhaps... before we start turning toward the light,  
we need to spend some time embracing the darkness—  
or letting it embrace us.*

*There are life-giving lessons to be learned there,  
even in our darkest times."*

### **Song 3**

[Within Our Darkest Night You Kindle A Fire that  
Never Dies Away](#) --Taize

### **Faith sharing:**

What life-giving lessons does the darkness teach?

What do you notice about holiness in the dark?

## **Reading 4:**

### **Isaiah 45:3-7**

I will give you treasures of darkness,  
riches hidden away,  
That you may know I am the LORD,  
the God of Israel, who calls you by name.  
For the sake of Jacob, my servant,  
of Israel my chosen one,  
I have called you by name,  
giving you a title, though you do not know me.  
I am the LORD, there is no other,  
there is no God besides me.  
It is I who arm you, though you do not know me,  
so that all may know, from the rising of the sun  
to its setting, that there is none besides me.  
I am the LORD, there is no other.  
I form the light, and create the darkness,  
I make weal and create woe;  
I, the LORD, do all these things.

## **Prayer Intentions**

Response: "Hear us, O God"

## **Closing Prayer**

Emmanuel, Our world waits in darkness longing for Your light. In the midst of darkness, enkindle our hope. As we long for lasting peace in the midst of war, be with us. As we long for families to be reunited, Be with us. As we long for enemies to be reconciled, Be with us. As we long for love and community, Be with us. Fulfill the deepest longings of your people and dispel the darkness in our hearts and in our world. Let your Word ignite the hope the world needs to bring to life your love and justice. Amen.

## **Song 4**

**"Christ, Be Our Light" By Bernadette Farrell**

## **Sending**

Go with peace to embrace the sacredness of darkness and share Light with the world.

**Thanks be to God**

