

WELCOME TO A DIFFERENT KIND OF ADVENT.

In the midst of our busy routines, we can sometimes reduce Advent to a simple countdown to Christmas—a list of deadlines to meet or tasks to finish. But Pope Leo XIV reminds us that Christ often wants to give us gifts outside of our expectations. He is present here with us not just in the Eucharist, but in our neighbors, in the poor, and in those who feel forgotten.

Inspired by the Holy Father's recent letter *Dilexi Te*, we created the [9-Step Missionary Advent Challenge](https://view.genially.com/6930d74de543b63dd697a2db), an interactive tool to help you move from passive waiting to active love, a way to shift your heart from "maintenance" to "mission." These nine "micro-missions" are not intended to be another checklist to complete, but rather windows to be opened.

How To Use This Resource

1. **1. Access the Challenge:** <https://view.genially.com/6930d74de543b63dd697a2db>. No



login required! The flip side of this sheet has the challenges in print.

1. **2. Follow the Spirit:** Don't feel pressured to "check every box" or go in order. Simply ask the Holy Spirit, "Where do you want to meet me today?" and tap the square that draws your heart.
2. **3. Quality over Quantity:** You might stay with one mission for three days. That is beautiful. The goal is not completion; the goal is encounter.

Some missions will ask for silence, others for service, and others for reconciliation. The challenge isn't to complete all 9 missions; the real challenge is to open ourselves to welcome Christ, the newborn King, in our encounters with others.

Pro Tip: How to access this resource throughout Advent:

Save this to your Phone You don't have to search for this email every day! You can save this Advent Examen to your home screen so it looks just like an app:

- iPhone: Click the link > Tap the "Share" icon (square with arrow) > Select "Add to Home Screen."
- Android: Click the link > Tap the three dots menu > Select "Add to Home Screen."
- Desktop: Click the Star icon in your browser's address bar (or press Ctrl + D / Cmd + D) to bookmark it.

Now you have a direct portal to the Advent Challenge whenever you have a quiet moment.

ADVENT CHALLENGE

Beyond the Wreath: A 9-Step Missionary Advent Challenge



The Forgiveness-Let It Go.

Meditate: You cannot hold the Christ Child if your hands are full of old grudges. **Mission:** Identify one person who has hurt you or treated you unfairly. You don't have to call them, but pray one Hail Mary for their specific intention today. Choose to forgive them in your heart.

The Fast-Create Space for Christ

Meditate: Fasting clears the clutter to make room for God—and it doesn't only mean food. **Mission:** Skip one meal today, or fast from social media for 24 hours. When you feel the hunger or the urge to scroll, offer a short prayer for someone in our Archdiocese who is suffering.

The Source-The Bread of Life

Meditate: He didn't just come in history; He comes in mystery on the Altar. **Mission:** Receive the Eucharist this week with intentional focus. After receiving, pray: "Jesus, make my heart like yours: broken and given for others."

The Preparation-Prepare the Way

Meditate: We often rush into Mass at the last second with scattered minds. **Mission:** This Sunday, arrive 15 minutes early. Sit in the pew, or kneel, and simply breathe. Read the Sunday Gospel before the liturgy begins to prepare the soil of your heart for the Word of God to dwell.

The Visit-Who is Waiting?

Meditate: Advent is about waiting, but many in our family and in our community are waiting for a friendly voice. **Mission:** Call a relative you haven't spoken to in a while, or visit a neighbor who might be spending the holidays alone. Be the face of Christ to them today.

The Table-Open Your Table

Meditate: Jesus constantly ministered around a dinner table. **Mission:** Invite someone to coffee, brunch, or dinner this week who isn't in your immediate inner circle—a coworker, a new parishioner, or someone with whom you need to reconnect. Be a missionary disciple.

The Silence-Silence the Noise

Meditate: Christ came in the quiet of Bethlehem, yet our world is so loud. **Mission:** Spend 10 minutes in absolute silence today. No phone, no radio, no podcasts. Just you and Christ. Ask Him: "Lord, what do you want to say to me this Advent?"

The Word-Mary's YES

Meditate: The Incarnation started with a question and an answer. **Mission:** Open your Bible to Luke Chapter 1 (The Annunciation). Read it slowly. Ask yourself: "What is God asking me to say 'Yes' to right now?"

The Gift-Love in Action

Meditate: Pope Leo XIV reminds us in *Dilexi Te* that love for God is inseparable from love for the poor. **Mission:** Clean out your closet today. Find one warm coat, a blanket, or a bag of clothes and donate it to Catholic Charities, a St. Vincent de Paul box, or a local shelter.