Ten Ways to Get More out of Advent!

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| 10 ways to reflect in Advent |

Keep a balance between the spiritual and the secular. Block into your calendar specific times every day for personal prayer, spiritual reading or reflection. As you move through Advent you will begin to relish those quiet moments in your day. They will become like a spiritual port in a secular storm. The prayer time will restore your spirit. The spiritual insights will help to keep you focused. Here are some simple ways to incorporate traditional Advent practices into your busy schedule:

1. **Reflect on Advent as a time of waiting**. The idea of waiting is not popular in our culture of instant gratification, but it creates in us a new kind of self-discipline that helps us to appreciate the present moment and look to the future with peaceful anticipation.
2. **Turn your breathing into a prayer.** Take a few deep breaths throughout the day and imagine that God's love is flowing through you to every part of your body. As you exhale, let go of tension, worry and anything else that is not of God.
3. **Long for the Lord.** Make it a habit of silently praying, "Come, Lord Jesus."
4. **Unite with Mary.** Set aside time once a day to join Our Lady in praying the Canticle of Mary (see Lk 1:46-55).
5. **Do something nice for someone every day.** It might be an encouraging word, a phone call, a note of appreciation or a little act of kindness.
6. **Get rid of grudges.** Use Advent as an opportunity to let go of any anger or resentment that you might be holding onto.
7. **Pray for patience.** If you find yourself becoming anxious or upset, ask the Lord for the gift of patience. Then make a conscious effort to be a more patient person.
8. **Offer up something painful or difficult in your life.** The best way to transform trials and tensions is to turn them into a prayer.
9. **Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.** Attend your parish penance service and take advantage of the opportunity to cleanse your soul in preparation for the coming of Jesus.

**10.Think about the special gifts and talents God has given you.** How are you using these gifts?