

# *Living well through Advent*

*Week One*

*Monday 28 November 2022*

*Simplicity and Balance*

*“Happiness is not a matter of intensity but of balance and order and rhythm and harmony.”*

*Thomas Merton*

In the reading from Romans this past Sunday (Romans 13: 11- 14), St Paul reminds us “Now is the moment for you to wake from sleep.” He warns us that if we are not mindful, we can sleepwalk through this Advent and holiday season, only to find out afterward that we missed experiencing what is most important.

Each week in Advent, we will focus on a theme related to our overall theme of Practicing Simplicity. This first week we will focus on “Simplicity and Balance.” We start with a focus on living with simplicity and balance because the culture around us will tempt us to do just the opposite over the next four weeks, luring us instead to do more, spend more, and expect more.

We’re also starting with simplicity and balance because one sure sign our lives are in balance is that we will experience both mental and emotional steadiness, which is at the heart of the four compass points on the Living Compass: heart, soul, strength, and mind. As we journey through Advent and these daily readings, we will learn that balance is not a static concept, but a dynamic, evolving choosing of what to let go of and what to hold on to in any given moment.

We may be surprised to discover that the balance God desires for us is found not in doing more, but in doing less, an idea that is clearly counter- cultural this time of year. We pray that God will awaken in us a desire to live with greater simplicity, intention, and balance.

Consider any or all of the following questions as you meditate on this theme.

- ◆ What connection do you see between simplicity and balance?
- ◆ As you begin your journey through Advent, are you aware of any choices that you want to make as you prepare for the coming of Christmas, choices that may be different from ones you have made in years past?
- ◆ Do you want to include simplicity and balance in what you are considering?
- ◆ How might this quote from Thomas Merton inspire you?

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