



One element in Benedictine spirituality that is appealing to many is the practice of honoring all work and all implements of the community as sacred—all things and each task become instruments of God’s kingdom.

As you move through the Advent season and into the celebration of Christmas, what preparations might offer opportunities for prayer? How might these “chores” of the season become symbols and offerings of God’s inbreaking into our everyday lives?

No complicated words are necessary, but using the list below as a guide, how might you view each holiday preparations as a practice of prayer?

- ❖ With each light strung, pray for the light of Christ to be made known in the heart of each person who sees them.
- ❖ As you seek out the perfect gift, can you pray for the person for whom you are shopping? How might your gift meet their need or desire? Can the gift purchased be a symbol of deeper, bigger prayers that you pray over their life?
- ❖ In each batch of cookies or other food preparations, how might you use this as a meditation on God’s abundance and provision? Pray for those who do not have enough food or experience food insecurity. Notice if you sense any kind of invitation from God to serve or provide food for another.
- ❖ As you rush through errands, could your car become a prayer chapel? Could the mall become a prayer walk? As you move in the hustle and bustle, is there an invitation to pray for the other drivers, shoppers and workers all around you?
- ❖ Christmas music is such a delight for many of us—how might God be speaking to you through those words, and encouraging the preparation of your own body, mind, heart and spirit for Christmas?
- ❖ Are there traditions that help you remember loved ones who are no longer present on earth? As you honor those memories, offer a short prayer of gratitude for the saints and witnesses in your life. Be reminded that these traditions are not for the sake of “going through the motions” but are threads that connect you to your loved ones.

This list is certainly not exhaustive, so let these ideas be a springboard to inspire your own prayers and reflections. As you engage with this prayer practice, how does the Holy Spirit transform you and your holiday tasks?