

*So stand at the crossroads and look;  
make a pathway for the Lord,  
ask where the good way is, and walk it.*

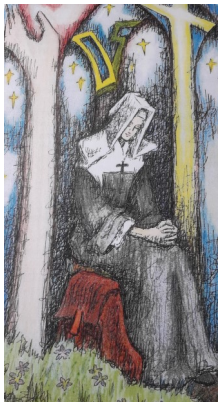
Jeremiah 6:16

During her long life Marie Louise was to experience many twists and turns on the path that she walked. Her call came when she resolved to go to confession to Fr de Montfort, the new hospital chaplain, and this decision was to change her life completely, though unaware of this at the time. This Advent what may we learn from Marie Louise that will guide us on our journey?

In the early years, after Montfort's departure, Marie Louise had to live with uncertainty and insecurity about her future life as a religious. But she remained faithful and obedient to her call in caring for people in the Poitiers Poorhouse. Her life changed radically in becoming poor with the poor and was a consoling and patient presence. Advent asks us to be patient even as God is patient with us.

*If I were a piece of cloth I would give myself to the poor.*

At even the busiest times Marie Louise was a woman of constant prayer and unshakeable hope deep within the Oratory of her heart. Advent asks us to be witnesses to hope and compassion.

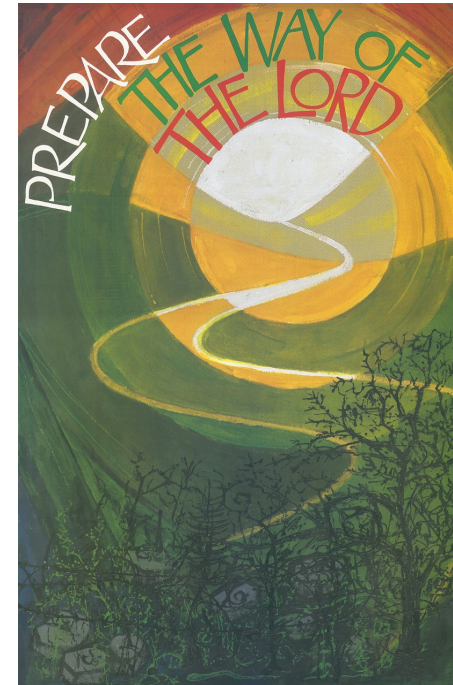


Marie Louise was a witness to forgiveness throughout her life particularly through her gentle and peaceful way with the community of Bourginettes and later in her life in St Laurent when faced with opposition within the community. Advent asks us to be forgiving as we are forgiven.

*I will hear what the Lord has to say,  
a voice that speaks of peace,  
peace for all his people.* Psalm 84

*Prepare in the wilderness  
a way for the Lord  
make His paths straight.*

Isaiah 40



*We experience the forgiveness  
and reconciliation that liberate  
and restore unity in charity.*

RL 44

*Second Sunday of Advent 2020*

## *Console my people, console them.*

Isaiah 40:1

On the second Sunday of Advent Isaiah begins with words of **Consolation** for the people of Israel who have been exiled to a distant land and are now returning home. Similarly St Mark begins his reading today with **'The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God'**. Both readings then lead us further into the full meaning of **Consolation** and **Good News** when John the Baptist appears in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The call for us this Advent is for us to be honest with ourselves before God as we journey along a straight path to Christmas filled with hope. We may fall short in our lives of the calling we received at our Baptism, but our God is forgiving and healing. In this lies the **Good News**, our **Consolation** and our great **Hope**.

Let us

*Hear what the Lord God has to say,  
a voice that speaks of peace,  
peace for all his people.  
Mercy and faithfulness have met;  
justice and peace have embraced.*

Psalm 84

The weeks before Christmas are always a busy time but Advent calls us to seek moments of stillness when we can reflect on what it means to say that God came to dwell among us and that He still comes into our world today with all its suffering, sorrows, joys and hopes. Is there an Advent Scripture reading or word today that speaks to you in a particular way as we wait in expectation of Christ's coming? Be still and listen to the God who speaks to you.

*Your Word is a lamp for my steps and a light for my path.*

## *What we are waiting for is what He promised: the new heavens and the new earth.*

2 Peter 3: 8-14

In **2 Peter 3: 8-14** there is a strong sense of Peter's own experience of being forgiven and healed by the Lord when he writes

*He is being patient with you all,  
wanting nobody to be lost and  
everybody to be brought to change their ways.*

These words of Peter are both consoling and Good News but they are also challenging us this Advent to **'change our ways'**. Take some time to reflect on what that might mean for you while waiting for the return of the Lord who loves us and consoles us **'like a shepherd feeding his flock, gathering lambs in his arms, holding them against his breast and leading to their rest the mother ewes'**. (Is 40:9)

At this time of uncertainty and change in our world and in all of Creation, we need to be silent, we need to listen, and we need to contemplate on what God is asking of us. Is God in His Wisdom telling us that **'everybody needs to be brought to change their ways'**? Our call in these times includes working to see the deeper invitation that this challenging time is providing. How may we become more conscious this Advent of necessary changes within ourselves, our communities, our country, our global community and all of Creation? What first steps might each of us take to move forward on the path to **'a new heaven and a new earth'**?

As we listen to the cries of the world surrounding us each day, we ask the Holy Spirit to show us the path we must take in our response.

