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FIRE OF ADVENT

Edward Hays,

A Pilgrim's Almanac, p. 187

“Advent, like its cousin Lent, is a season for prayer and reformation of our hearts. Since it comes at winter time, fire is a fitting sign to help us celebrate Advent...If Christ is to come more fully into our lives this Christmas, if God is to become really incarnate for us, then fire will have to be present in our prayer. Our worship and devotion will have to stoke the kind of fire in our souls that can truly change our hearts. Ours is a great responsibility not to waste this Advent time.”



and feel like. But to do that, to *see* and *feel* spirituality, we need a deeper level of language to help us fathom our experience. And so, as people have done throughout the ages, we turn to metaphors, images, and stories.”

DO ONE'S DUTY

Somerset Maugham

“To do one's duty sounds a rather cold and cheerless business, but somehow in the end it does give one an odd sort of satisfaction.”

TRUE FORGIVENESS

Leo Buscaglia

Loving Each Other

“There is another aspect of forgiveness even more demanding. It is a higher process built for forgiveness but surpassing it – forgetting. As long as we forgive, but maintain the memory of the hurt, the resentment, the feelings of being violated, as long as we live in the shadow of hurt, true forgiveness has not occurred....

But forgetting does not imply that we condone the wrong. It suggests that the action is past and for the future's sake it must be released so we can resume living again.”

FIRST VIRTUE

Cato

“I think the first virtue is to restrain the tongue, he approaches nearest to the gods who knows how to be silent. Even though he is in the right.”

ONE'S MISSION IN LIFE

Viktor Frankl

“Everyone has his own specific vocation or mission in life; everyone must carry out a concrete assignment that demands fulfillment. Therein he cannot be replaced, nor can his life be repeated. Thus, everyone's task is as unique as his specific opportunity to implement it.”

DO THE BEST

Helen Keller

“When we do the best that we can, we never know what miracle is wrought in our own life, or in the life of another.”

SELF-RESPECT

Abraham Herschel

“Self-respect is the fruit of discipline; the sense of dignity grows with the ability to say no to oneself.”

SEARCH FOR WISDOM

FAITH TODAY, 5/16/85

“Wisdom helps people to make judgements, to know what really counts. It enables people to sift through the often contradictory messages they hear.

Perhaps the beginning of wisdom is the recognition that value judgements have to be made at all.

Wisdom is the capacity to discern the truth and then apply it in a way that is loving.”

WHEN WORDS FAIL

Ernest Kurtz

Spirituality of Imperfection, p. 16

“When words fail, where can we turn? In order to understand spirituality, in order to live a spiritual life, we must first be able to imagine (‘image-in’) such a life, to form a mental picture (a ‘representation’) of what it might look



*Preparing for the
Christmas Season*

LEADER'S FUNCTION

Lyman Bryson

"The leader's function is to help determine, in any crisis, which of our possible selves will act."

WISDOM SEEDS

William Arthur Ward

"It is wise to direct your anger towards problems – not people; to focus your energies on answers – not excuses."

ON GOSSIP

Rev. Norman Vincent Peale

"Gossip is nothing but criticism motivated by jealousy or insecurity. Small people often find it easier to tear someone else down than to try to build themselves up. But what is their reward? No one trusts them. In the end, no one believes them."

TYRANNY OF THE URGENT

FAMILY WALK

"When we allow the tyranny of the urgent – the ever-increasing demands to siphon our tank of energy and interest so that the family is left with nothing but the fumes of broken promises and empty dreams, we are laboring in vain! We are substituting the artificial for the authentic, the carbon copy for the original...What a sad contradiction!"

GOD KNOWS US Vincent McNabb, OP

"God knows each of us and calls us by name. He has more faith in us than we do in ourselves, as if He believes that we can do more than we should ever find courage to do by ourselves."

CHRISTMAS POEM

Robert Louis Stevenson

"Loving Father, help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world.

Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting.

Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be your children, and the Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts,

forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen!"

AIM FOR ACHIEVEMENT

Helen Hayes

"Always aim for achievement, and forget about success."

ODE TO FINALS WEEK!Source Unknown
via <http://laugh-a-lot.com/>

"Twas the night before finals, and all through the college,

The students were praying for last minute knowledge.

Most were quite sleepy, but none touched their beds,

While visions of essays danced in their heads.

Out in the taverns, a few were still drinking,

And hoping that liquor would loosen up their thinking.

In my own apartment, I had been pacing,
And dreaded exams I soon would be facing.

My roommate was speechless, his nose in his books,

And my comments to him drew unfriendly looks.
I drained all the coffee, and brewed a new pot,

No longer caring that my nerves were shot.

I stared at my notes, but my thoughts were muddy,

My eyes went a blur, I just couldn't study.

"Some pizza might help," I said with a shiver,

But each place I called refused to deliver.

I'd nearly concluded that life was too cruel,

With futures depending on grades had in school.

When all of a sudden, our door opened wide,

And Patron Saint 'Put-It-Off' ambled inside.

Her spirit was careless, her manner was mellow,
She wore a white toga, she started to bellow:

"What kind of student would make such a fuss,
To toss back at teachers what they tossed at us?"

"On Cliff Notes! On Crib Notes! On last year's exams!

On Wingit and Slingit, and last minute crams!"
Her message delivered, she vanished from sight,

But we heard her laughing outside in the night.
"Your teachers have pegged you, so just do your best.

Happy finals to all, and to all, a good test!"

**CHRISTMAS**