



## Catechesis At Home – Climbing the Mountain

### First Sunday of Advent – Year A

#### REFLECTION – Light, Darkness and Mountain-climbing

Climbing a mountain is hard. We begin in the valley, nice, flat land; then we reach the foothills and it gets a little more difficult, but still fairly pleasant and easy-going. As we climb the mountain-proper, the way becomes more strenuous and treacherous. We are tempted to turn back to the easier paths. It is the same with our spiritual journey. As we climb higher up the Lord's mountain, the Devil works harder to keep us from going on. The temptations are harder to resist. At the same time, though, our strength is greater, the grace we have received and built up on our journey is more accessible, and our climb to the summit is more reachable than ever.

This is what our readings are about this first week of Advent. Mountaintops are light-filled, valleys lose the light of day more quickly, shadowed by those mountains. Our first reading speaks of light and the mountain summit. The Lord's house sits atop the summit and is full of Light. He calls us to Himself, and our journey up the mountain from the valley requires reliance on Him. St. Paul and Jesus speak of the vices that we need to leave behind, so we are worthy to live in the house of the Lord. Our journey up the mountain helps us to do just that.

Our journey this Advent begins with a promise – salvation for those who believe and hope in the Lord. In order to be prepared for His coming, we must put aside our selfishness, pride, vanity and lust – those root sins that keep us from truly living in the Light of Truth. The Son of Man is coming, no one knows the day or the hour (Matthew 24:42,44). We must ready ourselves.

This Advent as we climb the holy mountain to His house, we can strengthen our resolve, grow in perseverance and stamina to fight the Devil's temptations, calling on the strength of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will lead us up that mountain, joyfully, so we can all sing with the Psalmist, "Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord!" (Psalm 122:1)

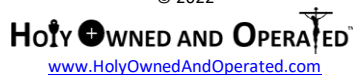
#### DISCUSSION – Am I in the Valley or on the Mountainside?

This week reflect on where you are in your faith journey. Do you feel you are in the valley, among the foothills, or on the mountainside? What struggles and vices are you fighting that you need to ask Jesus to help you fight? Be open with your family and friends, how can we help each other as we climb God's mountain? Do you feel like you are in darkness or light? We all feel both throughout our journey, and recognizing when we are in darkness, is the first step toward the light. If we are in the light, how can we stay there and potentially help others step forward into it?

#### ACTIVITY – Climbing out of Darkness and Moving Toward the Summit

When climbing a mountain, there are many times we need to rest and consult our map to make sure we are on the right path. The Sacrament of Confession is this rest and re-set for our spiritual journey. Go to

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Confession this week. The resources for a good examination of conscience are below. And after having made a good Confession, go to Mass and recognize Jesus Christ in the Eucharist – the Source and Summit of our Faith ([CCC, 1324](#))

**DIG DEEPER – Other *Climbing the Mountain* resources from Holy Owned and Operated:**

Page: [Advent Resources](#)

Page: [Resources](#) - scroll down for Examinations of Conscience for all ages

Page: [FAR OUT - Faith and Reason Outdoor Unity Tour](#)

TWMWU: [Faith, Works, Light, Darkness, and Eternal Life](#)

TWMWU: [2nd Week of Lent - The Lord is My Light](#)

TWMWU: [Prepare the Way of the Lord!](#)

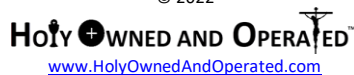
TWMWU: [First Week of Advent - Watch!](#)

Post: [The Meanings Behind our Advent Traditions](#)

Podcast: [Eucharist - Episode 54](#)

Podcast: [Celebrating Advent - Episode 70](#)

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