



THE
NATIONAL
SHRINE OF **Mary**
MOTHER OF THE CHURCH



Advent is a special time in the Church's calendar, one that is especially connected to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Pope John Paul II, who had a deep devotion to Our Lady, said in an [Angelus address](#) in 2003, "In this journey of expectation and hope that is Advent, the Ecclesial Community is identified more closely than ever with the Most Holy Virgin. May it be she, the Virgin of expectation, who helps us to open our hearts to the One who, by his coming among us, brings the priceless gift of peace to all humanity."

Below are two prayers, combined from addresses Pope John Paul II gave in [1999](#) and [2004](#). Together they make a beautiful prayer for Advent, invoking the Blessed Mother's intercession in these final days before we celebrate the birth of Jesus and the mystery of the Incarnation.

May the Virgin Mary help us to open the doors of our hearts to Christ, Redeemer of man and of history; may she teach us to be humble, because God looks upon the lowly; may she enable us to grow in understanding the value of prayer, of inner silence, of listening to God's Word; may she spur us to seek God's will deeply and sincerely, even when this upsets our plans; may she encourage us while we wait for the Lord, sharing our time and energies with those in need. Mother of God, Virgin of expectation, grant that the God-who-comes will find us ready to receive the abundance of his mercy. May Mary Most Holy, "Woman of the Eucharist" and Virgin of Advent, prepare us all to joyfully welcome Christ's coming and to celebrate worthily his sacramental presence in the mystery of the Eucharist. Amen