

Let us pray:

God of surprises, you surprised the world when you, the ground of all being, became a being; you who created all humanity, became a human being; you who sustain all things by your love, became One so sustained, and all that we might come to know your heart. How can it be that the Great Mystery makes itself known? How can it be that you take on our humanity without gaining anything; that you empty yourself of your heavenly fullness without losing anything? Our hearts overflow with gratitude for your acts of love.

Grant us, in this time of preparation, the grace to continue to be surprised.

Crack open the closed boxes of our minds, that the mystery of your mind might overflow us, and silence our silly-minded stammerings. So much of our thinking is self-centered, ego-driven, and unloving. Give us the grace to see the sinfulness of so much of our thinking, and grant us courage to replace it with your holy silence. May we stand in speechless awe before you until we know what is true.

Break open the hidden places of our hearts, that the wonder of your love might overpower us, and quiet the chaos of our souls. Our feelings are often such a seething mass of desire and conflict, attachment and remorse, joy and pain. Give us the grace to own our feelings, beautiful and ugly, acceptable and unacceptable, and grant us the courage to lay the honest truth of our selves before your heart. May our hearts be emptied of all but quiet expectation before you until we come to feel the rhythm of your own heart of love.

Challenge us with the work of a moment's inaction, that out of the stillness of your eternal Now we might truly know how to act as you act. So much of our business accomplishes nothing important, spends energy we do not have, misspends our time, or is only focused on our self-determined good and not that of all the rest of the glory of your creation. Give us grace to step back from ourselves, sidestep our self-importance, and grant us the courage to choose surrender. May our hands be quiet in holy rest before you until we know what to do.

Give us eyes to see what is truly true, hearts to love what is pure love, and hands to do what is honestly worth doing, and until that vision comes clear, give us silence, patience, and a measure of peace that passes all understanding, that in quiet confidence we might know that you are God.

God of the Incarnation, break into our overwrought world once more and surprise us, for we wait for you.

Amen.