

Make Room for Emmanuel

There was no place for them in the inn —Luke 2:7

ADVENT PRAYER BY JOYCE RUPP

When I become overly-engaged in life's activities and allow them to crowd out space for essential prayer and reflection,
help me make room for you in my heart, Emmanuel.

When the pain of a world weary with war and violence threatens my hope and diminishes my belief in the goodness of humanity,
help me make room for you in my heart, Emmanuel.

When I am asked to forgive another's failings or to let go of old hurts that cling stubbornly to my aggrieved self,
help me make room for you in my heart, Emmanuel.

When I give undue attention to myself, or when excessive preoccupation with my own schedule tempts me to ignore the needs of others,
help me make room for you in my heart, Emmanuel.

When jealousy or resentment of another's good fortune takes away from my gratitude for all I have been given,
help me make room for you in my heart, Emmanuel.

When another's religion, skin colour, sexual orientation, or personal beliefs differ from my own,
help me make room for you in my heart, Emmanuel.

When the heartache and distress of those dear to me saddens my spirit and suffocates my desire to bring joy to others,
help me make room for you in my heart, Emmanuel.

When peace seems far away from my deeper self, crushing distress pays daily visits to my body, mind, or spirit,
help me make room for you in my heart, Emmanuel.

When the day is done and I look over the hours that have passed before I rest my head on the pillow of sleep,
help me make room for you in my heart, Emmanuel.

When I join friends and family to celebrate the gift of your birth in human form and gather to remember your boundless love,
help me make room for you in my heart, Emmanuel.

All Emmanuel, God-with-us, you stand at the door of my heart and await my welcome. Help me to be aware of your presence each day in the people who enter my life. I desire to open my heart, to make room for you in any part of self that tends to keep you out. Show me those places where you still need a welcome. Spur on my courage to open the door and invite you in. I want to make room for you in my heart, Emmanuel.