

The Pray More Advent Retreat Study Guide

How to Have More Joy with Ashley Stevens

Reflective Questions

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the holy Spirit.” – Romans 15:13

1. Ashley explains that everyone shows joy differently. How do you show your joy in the Lord? Are there certain things you can do to increase your joy in the Lord (say the Rosary, go to Adoration, help the poor, etc.)? This Advent, which of these things will you choose to do more of to increase your joy?
2. The more we fill our lives with God’s word and goodness, the better equipped we are to reflect God’s joy. How do you choose goodness in your life? Do you choose to read the Bible instead of surfing social media? Do you listen to joyful music? Do you get to know God better by listening to Catholic podcasts or radio? What changes can you make in your life to fill it with more joyful activities?
3. Ashley explains that when she begins her day with something that helps her see God’s goodness, she feels more joyful. What changes can you make to your day so that you start it off hearing God’s word or becoming closer to Him? Choose one or two things you will do differently every morning this Advent to help you reflect on God’s love for you. Then get up a few minutes early and do them. How do you think your life will change?
4. Ashley stresses that we must pray without ceasing. This is sometimes difficult. Can you think of a time when unceasing prayer helped get you through something difficult? Why does God want us to go to Him in prayer? And what can you do to quiet the outside world so you can better hear God’s voice?
5. In everything, give thanks. That’s so important for all of us! Advent is a time of joy and a time to be thankful that our Lord came to redeem us. But oftentimes, the craziness of the season robs us of this joy. What about this

time before Christmas robs you of the joy you should feel this Advent season? How can you get rid of those thieves and maintain the joy that Christ desperately wants you to have?