



DECONSTRUCT: An Advent Devotional

Week 3

Pray

Deconstruct us, O God, by your word. Drive out all sin and evil from us and put us back together in ways that are pleasing in your sight so that we may serve you and love your creation all the days of our life. Amen.

Read Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
³ to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.
⁴ They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.

- ⁸ For I the LORD love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
- ⁹ Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge
that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.
- ¹⁰ I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
- ¹¹ For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

[Click Here to Watch the Video](#)

Eddie Rosa-Fuentes, Trinidad Lutheran, Chicago, IL

Confess

(If there is more than one of you, designate leaders to read the different L parts.)

L1: Far too long, we have neglected God's call to show your love to those who are oppressed, brokenhearted, captive, and in prison. Still, you call us to this work. Deconstruct our ways of life, our systems of oppression, our patterns of sin that your Spirit might again rest on us and our voices and lives might proclaim your favor for those most in need.

(Name one way God may be calling you to speak God's favor into the lives of those who are oppressed, brokenhearted, captive or in prison.)

L2: O God, we have been part of "robbery and wrongdoing." We confess that we have injured the earth, taken more than we deserve, turned away when others were treated unjustly, and disregarded the suffering of others. May we learn to love your justice as you do and seek it for all who are in need.

(Name aloud those who are most in need of justice.)

L3: O God, there are so many who mourn. Many have lost loved ones, others have lost jobs or homes, still others of us have lost ways of life and rituals that gave our lives meaning. Revive our spirits again that we might live as your people.

(Name the losses you have suffered in the past year.)

Forgive

(If you are by yourself, read these words of promise as you make the sign of the cross. If you are with others, read this to another person and make the sign of the cross on the person's forehead.)

Child of God, hear the good news: in the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven. The Spirit of God is upon you and you are called to proclaim God's love to all who are in need. Tell it among the oppressed, the brokenhearted, the captives, the prisoners, and to all who mourn. Amen.

Action – SOUL

How is it with your soul? This is a question that Spiritual Directors have been asking for centuries. It often takes people by surprise but it's a question that invites you to get still and simply listen. This work of deconstructing is about listening within and listening outside of ourselves in order to hone our senses as we lean into the work and compassion we are invited to embody.

Take some time to listen within this week, answering the question, "How is it with your soul?" Find an image or uncover a metaphor that reflects your answer.

Take some time this week to notice what you're seeing with people in your life.

- What do you notice about how they are showing up in the world?
- What are they struggling with?
- What brings them joy?

Ask someone in your life the question, "How is it with your soul?"

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