Advent is a time of preparation, a time for us to take stock of our relationship with God and neighbor, and a time to reorient ourselves toward all that really matters in this life. While we may not live this time of waiting for the coming of our Savior as intensely as Great Lent, we can incorporate its three spiritual pillars in unique and fruitful ways:

**Prayer**

If you don’t already have a regular prayer routine, now is a great time to create one! Start simply, spending five or ten minutes in the morning to pray the Rosary, read from Scripture, or just sit quietly and ask the Lord to speak in your heart.

Ask your spouse to pray with you before bed. Make it an opportunity to share your gratitude for each other and bring your concerns and petitions to God. If you’re new to praying together, it’s okay to keep it short and sweet! God will hear you and, with time and practice, He’ll help you to become more comfortable and deepen your prayer.

**Fasting**

It’s not just about giving up certain foods. There are lots of other things you can fast from that will help reorient your focus toward God and your spouse. Fast from being critical or judgmental. Fast from dwelling on negative thoughts when they pop up (such as, “God will never give us a baby”; “Is God punishing us?”) and try to replace them with affirmations (“We don’t understand why we’re in this season, but God loves us and He has given us many blessings already”). Call to mind one or two things for which you’re thankful, write them on a sticky note and put it where you can see and read it again and again.

**Almsgiving**

Infertility is hard, and it really does feel like a desert. But it also opens us up to being radically available to others who need us. Giving money to charity or our parish is just one way to give alms. We can give the alms of our time through volunteering, the alms of our hospitality by inviting single friends, elderly family members and others to our home for a meal and conversation, or the alms of our presence by being there for a friend or family member in need.