

# Will you accept the Hallow #Pray25 Advent Challenge?

With the busiest time of the year right around the corner, the last thing most people want is one more responsibility on their plate. However, one tool might be just the thing to help you slow down and allow you to enjoy the preparational season of Advent.

“This time of year is always an incredibly busy and often very stressful period,” said Alessandro DiSanto, co-founder of [the Hallow app](#). “It’s easy to spend time looking forward to Thanksgiving and then get caught in a whirlwind of year-end work deadlines, cookie baking and holiday parties before coming to the realization that it’s time to go to the Christmas vigil Mass. We wanted to create a simple and accessible way to keep Christ at the center of our everyday experience of the season.”

Hallow is an authentically Catholic app focused on guided prayer and meditation that DiSanto, Alex Jones and Erich Kerekes co-founded when they saw their friends replacing faith with secular meditation, mindfulness apps and yoga.

And it seems they were on to something: Eleven months and 65,000 downloads later (in more than 10 countries), Hallow has earned the No. 1 Catholic app spot in the United States Apple App Store.

The app isn’t hard to use, and it’s not filled with every Catholic thing. Instead, it offers simplicity of design and selection: 5- to 15-minute audio-guided sessions spanning quite a few contemplative prayer techniques, such as *lectio divina*, the Rosary, the examen, Taize chant and spiritual writing.

“After realizing that we had become the No. 1 Catholic prayer

app, we took a look back to see who our users are and what they have enjoyed about the app,” DiSanto said.

The Hallow team noticed that while people “spend more time engaging with their faith seasonally” – especially during Lent – they “often don’t have as many great resources during Advent.”

And that brings us to the Hallow #Pray25 Advent Challenge.

“One of the things we noticed is that we have a large number of users who had previously fallen away from the Faith or who are consciously looking to reprioritize their spiritual development,” DiSanto said. “We wanted to especially offer those types of users an accessible way to contemplate the path to Christmas through the four themes of Advent.”

Those four themes are hope, faith, joy and peace, corresponding with the four weeks of Advent. Each Sunday, users will listen to a meditation on the week’s theme. Monday through Thursday, the app will guide users through different sessions that follow the weekly theme, using *lectio divina*, the examen, Taize chant and meditation. Friday includes an examen to help people reflect on the week, and each Saturday will have a guided Rosary using the Joyful Mysteries. For the last seven days of Advent, the prayer will end with the 0 Antiphons – recited verses that accompany the Magnificat canticle of evening prayer for the Liturgy of the Hours.

On Christmas, “We won’t have a session,” DiSanto said, because they are encouraging users to go to Mass.

“We are excited to continue to help people connect their daily lives to the liturgical calendar,” DiSanto said.

Hallow offers a 14-day free trial for premium content for most of the year, but to help spread the Advent cheer, they’re extending that offer to 30 days until Christmas. So [sign up at any point during Advent](#) and spend the next 30 days growing

closer to God and exploring the many ways Hallow can help you with that.

*Sarah Reinhard writes from Ohio.*