

1st Sunday of Advent

ADVENT CALLS US to prepare for the two comings of Christ: in the Incarnation and at the end of time. The gospel on the first Sunday of the new liturgical year urges us to be ready to greet the Son of Man. We are to be awake and aware of our surroundings and concerns.

A quick reading of this gospel may lead us to long for a gentler time. The images of roaring seas and waves can cause turmoil, fear or unease. This time of year can be busy with demands on our energy, time, and resources, demands that may trap and weigh us down. We wonder how we can be ready to greet Christ at the

end of time when our hearts and minds are trapped in the demands of today. But as we learn to recognize Christ in the present, we will be ready to stand before the Son of Man.

Jesus calls us to be alert and raise our heads, recognizing salvation is near. Advent is a time to refocus and put worry away, for our God has come to us. Today as we celebrate the Eucharist, may we come with hearts ready to encounter Christ in the Word, in the people among us, and in the breaking of the bread so that, nourished, we may be ready to greet Christ in our midst.

Catherine Ecker

People and Prayers to Remember this Week

Readings of the Day

Jeremiah 33.14-16

1 Thessalonians 3.12 - 4.2

Psalm 25

Luke 21.25-28, 34-36

Responding to the Word

Jesus urges us to watch for him so as not to be completely surprised. What daily anxieties make it hard to watch for Christ?

2nd Sunday of Advent

PROPHETS OF OLD like Isaiah and John the Baptist remain meaningful and powerful voices for our time. Together with Jesus, they stood up and cried out in all possible ways to challenge any type of oppression or injustice as well as the unfaithfulness of their people. Yet they were also exceptional agents of change, tireless preachers of conversion and bearers of good news.

Who would deny that there are paths that need to be made straight and ways to be made smooth everywhere in today's world? Humankind is dying for hope and reconciliation, which seem so elusive, while political powers and leaders fall short

of solutions to straighten what goes wrong on this planet and between nations.

We badly need the courage, hope and sense of justice displayed by the prophets. They keep telling us about the ways of the Lord, ways that lead humankind towards peace and lasting joy. May we all open up our hearts to the voices of these prophets, so that we straighten our own ways and become true agents of change in the world. May we too become genuine voices evermore dedicated to the good news brought about by Jesus, voices grounded in love, compassion, justice and joy.

Jean-Pierre Prévost

People and Prayers to Remember this Week

Readings of the Day

Baruch 5.1-9

Philippians 1.3-6, 8-11

Psalms 126

Luke 3.1-6

Responding to the Word

John prepares a way so that God can come to us. What obstacles need to be removed this Advent so that God can come to me?
