

READINGS AND REFLECTION FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

A READING FROM THE PROPHET ISAIAH 63:16-17; 64: 1, 3-8

You, Lord, yourself are our Father. Our Redeemer is your ancient name.
Why, Lord, leave us to stray from your ways and harden our hearts against fearing you?
Return, for the sake of your servants. Open the heavens and come down.
At your Presence the mountains would melt. No ear has heard, no eye has seen any god
but you who act like this for those who trust him. You guide those who act with integrity and
keep your ways in mind. We had long been rebels against you.
We were all like men unclean, our integrity like filthy clothing.
We have all withered like leaves and our sins blew us away like the wind.
No one invoked your name or roused himself to catch hold of you for you hid your face from us
and gave us up to the power of our sins. Yet, Lord, you are our Father;
we the clay, you the potter, we are all the work of your hand.

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 79: 2-3, 15-16, 18-19

O Shepherd of Israel hear us. Shine forth from your cherubim throne.
O Lord, rouse up your might. O Lord, come to our help.

Lord, make us turn to you, let us see your face and we shall be saved.

God of hosts, turn again, we implore, look down from heaven and see.
Visit this vine and protect it, the vine your right hand has planted.

Lord, make us turn to you, let us see your face and we shall be saved.

May your hand be on the man you have chosen, the man you have given your strength.
And we shall never forsake you again; give us life that we may call upon your name.

Lord, make us turn to you, let us see your face and we shall be saved.

A READING FROM THE FIRST LETTER OF ST PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS 1:3-9

May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send you grace and peace. I never stop thanking
God for all the graces you have received through Jesus Christ. I thank God you have been enriched
in so many ways, especially in your teachers and preachers.

The witness to Christ has indeed been strong among you so that you will not be without any of
the gifts of the Spirit while you are waiting for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. He will keep
you steady and without blame until the last day, the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, because God,
by calling you, has joined you to his Son, Jesus Christ; and God is faithful.

The Word of the Lord.

<p>Lord, show us your mercy and love, and grant us your salvation.</p>

A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK 13:33-37

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Be on your guard, stay awake, you never know when the time will
come. It is like a man travelling abroad. He has gone from home and left his servant in charge,
each with his own task, and he has told the door keeper to stay awake.

Stay awake, you do not know when the master of the house is coming - evening, midnight,
cockcrow, dawn. If he comes unexpectedly, he must not find you asleep.

What I say to you, I say to all: Stay awake!

The Gospel of the Lord.

Taken from THE JERUSALEM BIBLE, published and copyright 1966

REFLECTION

Some Riches of Advent for Us

Prophets call us to insights we may have forgotten, or not known, understood or accepted. **Isaiah** proclaimed God is faithful though we may not be. **Paul** knew the Corinthians had important gifts in community and also needed to grow in faith, hope and love. **Mark** advised his persecuted community to 'stay awake, be ready' to grow in their faith in who Jesus is. His Passion tested Jesus' own faith in his Father.

Karl Rahner (Jesuit theologian 1904 – 1984) wrote prophetically "**The Christian of tomorrow will be a mystic - i.e. one who has experienced God in the 'stuff of life' - or he or she will be nothing.**" Rahner invites us to yield to God, alert to reality for us. Advent is time for us to contemplate amid the 'stuff of our lives God in Christ born for all. Advent practices were established in parts of the Church by 480 A.D..

Advent changes things we do in our Churches. **It begins a new Liturgical Year** which portrays and engages us in the Mystery of Christ. **New cycles for reading the scriptures** in our Masses begin – this year, Year B on Sundays and Cycle I on weekdays.

The Liturgical colour changes from the green of Ordinary Time **to the violet of Advent.** Violet invites us to a new start, a change of heart with a penitential spirit ready to grow with a spirit of expectant faith, hope and love waiting for the coming of Christ.

"Advent" means "the coming". **We prepare for the Coming of Jesus the Christ in three ways.** **Firstly,** we remember Jesus was born in Bethlehem. **Secondly,** we welcome Jesus into our hearts today. **Thirdly,** we believe Jesus will come in glory at the end of time.

The Advent Wreath, the Jesse Tree, the Advent Calendar and our Christmas Appeal for people who are in need, can encourage us.

The Advent Wreath's leafy circle and (purple, purple, pink, purple and white) candles each have their symbolism nurturing our minds and hearts.

The Jesse Tree is adorned with symbols of the men and women living in covenant relationship with God and ultimately looking forward to the coming of the Messiah.

The Advent Calendar counts the days of Advent in anticipation of Christmas Day. Scripture, prayer, an insight or a suggested activity each day can nourish us in practical faith, hope and love.

OUR SVDP'S CHRISTMAS APPEAL FOR PEOPLE DOING IT TOUGH BEGINS TODAY.

PLEASE MAY WE INVITE YOU TO DONATE FOOD ITEMS. SOME SUGGESTIONS COULD BE:

pasta and pasta sauce • rice • tins of fruit or vegetables (mixed bean salad, potato salad, carrots, corn, potatoes, beetroot • tins of ham • tinned biscuits • fruit mince pies • tea, coffee, milo • long life milk • long life juice • long life full cream custard • packets of jelly • sweet or savoury biscuits • jams • Christmas cake • large packets of chips • packets of sweets Kindy • Christmas crackers • Christmas serviettes.

THANK YOU.