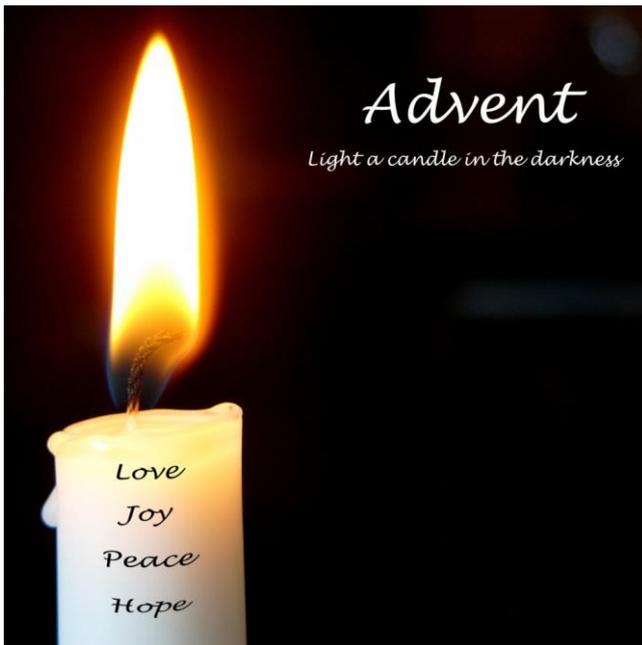


The First Sunday of Advent Year C



Scripture theme

The Advent spirit of waiting and longing for the Lord reminds us of the daily call to holiness. We are to be found blameless when he comes, living lives of honesty and integrity. We are to avoid the temptations to escapism from the true meaning of life. The temptations come in many guises.

FIRST READING *Jeremiah 33:14-16.*

See, the days are coming – it is the Lord who speaks – when I am going to fulfil the promise I made to the House of Israel and the House of Judah:

‘In those days and at that time,
I will make a virtuous Branch grow for David,
who shall practice honesty and integrity in the land.
In those days Judah shall be saved
and Israel shall dwell in confidence.
And this is the name the city will be called:
the Lord-our-integrity.’

Responsorial Psalm: *Ps 24*

Response : *To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.*

1. Lord, make me know your ways.
Lord, teach me your paths.
Make me walk in your truth, and teach me:
for you are God my saviour. **Response**

2. The Lord is good and upright.
He shows the path to those who stray,
he guides the humble in the right path;
he teaches his way to the poor. **Response**

3. His ways are faithfulness and love
for those who keep his covenant and will.
The Lord's friendship is for those who revere him;
to them he reveals his covenant. *Response*

SECOND READING: **1 Thessalonians 3:12-4:2**

May the Lord be generous in increasing your love and make you love one another and the whole human race as much as we love you. And may he so confirm your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless in the sight of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus Christ comes with all his saints.

Finally, brothers, we urge you and appeal to you in the Lord Jesus to make more and more progress in the kind of life that you are meant to live: the life that God wants, as you learnt from us, and as you are already living it. You have not forgotten the instructions we gave you on the authority of the Lord Jesus

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!
Let us see, O Lord, your mercy
and give us your saving help.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL: **Luke 21:25-28, 34-36**

Jesus said to his disciples: 'There will be signs in the sun and moon and stars; on earth nations in agony, bewildered by the clamour of the ocean and its waves; men dying of fear as they await what menaces the world, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand erect, hold your heads high, because your liberation is near at hand.'

'Watch yourselves, or your hearts will be coarsened with debauchery and drunkenness and the cares of life, and that day will be sprung on you suddenly, like a trap. For it will come down on every living man on the face of the earth. Stay awake, praying at all times for the strength to survive all that is going to happen, and to stand with confidence before the Son of Man.'

Advent

This coming Sunday is the first day of Advent. If you've been reading my blog for more than a year, you know that I generally make a big deal out of Advent. If you're new to my blog, however, you may wonder why I bother. My goal in this post is to explain what Advent is. My next post in this series will make the case for taking Advent seriously.

When is Advent?

Advent is a season in the Christian year that lasts for about four weeks. It begins four Sundays before Christmas and ends on Christmas Eve, thus there is some variation in its length. If you're unfamiliar with the idea of Christian seasons, you might find helpful a series I've written called: [Introduction to the Christian Year](#). I should mention that Eastern Orthodox Christians do not recognize Advent per se, but have a longer season that is rather like Advent. Their Nativity Fast begins in the middle of November and is a season for repentance and abstinence.

In our secular celebration of Christmas, the Christmas season (or *holiday* season, though) begins in the weeks prior to Christmas Day. Generally, this season starts in early December, though retailers have a bad habit of beginning Christmas in November (or even October). In my rule book, you shouldn't listen to Christmas music or turn on Christmas lights until after you've finished the Thanksgiving turkey . . . at the earliest. Of course outside of my immediate family, nobody follows my rules . . . especially retailers.

So Advent overlaps with what is usually thought of in American culture as the Christmas season. But its beginning and ending are well defined, and its themes are quite a bit different from what is commonly associated with secular Christmas celebrations.

What is Advent?

The Christian season of Christmas actually begins on Christmas Eve and lasts for twelve days, ending on January 6. (No, the twelve-day season of Christmas did not start with the song. It was the other way around.) The time before Christmas is Advent, *a season of preparation for Christmas*. Christians prepare for celebrating the birth of Jesus by remembering the longing of the Jews for a Messiah. In Advent, we're reminded of how much we ourselves also need a Savior, and we look forward to our Savior's second coming even as we prepare to celebrate his first coming at Christmas. The word "Advent" comes from the Latin word *adventus*, which means "coming" or "visit." In the season with this name, we keep in mind both "advents" of Christ, the first in Bethlehem and the second yet to come.

Christmas Carols Concert

Sunday 20th
December
6:30pm

Sts Peter & Paul's
Catholic Church

377 Dorcas St, South Melbourne



Entry by donation

All money raised will go to
support those suffering from
the conflict in Iraq and Syria