

# Sunday Message

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE WORD

Year A • 27 November 2022 • Psalter Week 1



## WAIT UP!

MATTHEW 24:37-44

Today we begin the season of Advent, the great season of waiting. We are waiting for the coming of the Lord at Christmas; we wait expectedly for the one who saves us.

During this season, we contemplate two different comings of Jesus into our world. The first refers to his birth as our Saviour more than two thousand years ago. The second refers to his future return in glory as judge at the end of time. It is only from the Fourth Sunday of Advent that the coming of the Christ-child at Christmas moves into centre stage.

This season is a reminder to prepare not just to welcome the Lord at Christmas but for an even more wondrous coming – of the Lord at the end time. Advent challenges us to consider how we are preparing for the Lord's arrival. What is it we are waiting for? Are we living day-to-day in such a way that we are ready when he comes?

We all know that waiting of any kind is difficult today. We live in a culture of wanting things now. Having to wait at a red light annoys us; being stuck in a barely moving queue frustrates us. If our internet connection isn't working, we get angry. Like instant messaging and instant coffee, we demand instant results, and we want them now.

It can be the same with our relationships. If my relationship with someone is in difficulty, I can be tempted to give up on it. If things start to go wrong for me personally, I can feel like quitting or even giving up on life itself.

It's the same with our relationship with God and the Church. When God is slow to answer our prayers or doesn't seem to answer them at all, we can be tempted to stop praying or give up on God altogether. The scandals in the Church can leave us angry, disillusioned, and inclined to walk away.

Patience or stick-at-it-ness is challenging in so many ways and areas of life. Advent challenges this thinking; it is about patient, hopeful waiting. One of the most striking things about Jesus was his patience. People resisted his message; many opposed him; even his closest friends misunderstood him, but he didn't give up on them. Time and again, he is patient with them. Remember how Peter denied him three times, yet Jesus forgave him and welcomed him back.

It's how God has always treated God's people. In the Bible, the people of Israel kept turning their backs on God, letting God down. But God never gave up on them; over and over again, God forgave them. In the end, God even sent his Son among them to save them, to show them how to live. ■

SAY

Come, Lord Jesus.

PRAY

Ask the Lord to help you live in such a way that you will always be ready for his coming.

REFLECT

So as we begin this season of Advent, think about how good you are at waiting. This season offers us an assurance and a challenge.

First, it reminds us of something wonderfully consoling: God never gives up on us; God is ceaselessly patient with us. Even when we let God down; even when we turn our backs on God; no matter what we do or don't do – God forgives us, puts up with us, never abandons us. God is constantly calling us into relationship.

Second, this season challenges us to practise patience in every dimension of our lives. Slow down, take time to notice things. Learn to be a little more patient with yourself and with others, too. Do something to build up anticipation as you journey through this season: dress a Jesse tree, use an Advent calendar, say a daily Advent prayer. Let the season build momentum.

Advent calls us to persevere on our faith journey, never to give up, for God is faithful to God's promises. ■

LEARN

Advent marks the beginning of the Church's new year.

The season of Advent is a time of preparation for the Lord's coming at Christmas. It also prepares us for the second coming of Christ at the end of time.

The Christian is always ready for the coming of the Lord.

DO

Make some extra time for prayer each day during the season of Advent.

Talk to your children or grandchildren (or a young relative) about the meaning of Advent.

Make an Advent wreath.



**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

To you, I lift up my soul, O my God.  
In you, I have trusted; let me not be put to shame.  
Nor let my enemies exult over me;  
and let none who hope in you be put to shame.

**COLLECT**

Grant your faithful, we pray, almighty God, the resolve to run forth to meet your Christ with righteous deeds at his coming, so that, gathered at his right hand, they may be worthy to possess the heavenly Kingdom.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

**FIRST READING**

Isaiah 2:1-5

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

The vision of Isaiah son of Amoz, concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

In the days to come  
the mountain of the Temple of the Lord  
shall tower above the mountains  
and be lifted higher than the hills.  
All the nations will stream to it,  
peoples without number will come to it; and they will say:

“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,  
to the Temple of the God of Jacob  
that he may teach us his ways  
so that we may walk in his paths;  
since the Law will go out from Zion,  
and the oracle of the Lord from Jerusalem.”

He will wield authority over the nations  
and adjudicate between many peoples;  
these will hammer their swords into  
ploughshares,  
their spears into sickles.  
Nation will not lift sword against nation,  
there will be no more training for war.  
O House of Jacob, come,  
let us walk in the light of the Lord.  
The word of the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.

**PSALM**

Psalm 121

Response:

I rejoiced when I heard them say:  
“Let us go to God’s house.”

1. I rejoiced when I heard them say:  
“Let us go to God’s house.”  
And now our feet are standing  
within your gates, O Jerusalem. (R.)
2. It is there that the tribes go up,  
the tribes of the Lord.  
For Israel’s law it is,  
there to praise the Lord’s name.  
There were set the thrones of judgement  
of the house of David. (R.)
3. For the peace of Jerusalem pray:  
“Peace be to your homes!  
May peace reign in your walls,  
in your palaces, peace!” (R.)
4. For love of my brethren and friends  
I say: “Peace upon you!”  
For love of the house of the Lord  
I will ask for your good. (R.)

**SECOND READING** Romans 13:11-14

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans.

You know “the time” has come: you must wake up now: our salvation is even nearer than it was when we were converted. The night is almost over, it will be daylight soon – let us give up all the things we prefer to do under cover of the dark; let us arm ourselves and appear in the light. Let us live decently as people do in the daytime: no drunken orgies, no promiscuity or licentiousness, and no wrangling or jealousy. Let your armour be the Lord Jesus Christ.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Alleluia, alleluia!

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

**GOSPEL**

Mathew 24:37-44

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus said to his disciples: “As it was in Noah’s day, so will it be when the Son of Man comes. For in those days before the Flood people were eating, drinking, taking wives, taking husbands, right up to the day Noah went into the ark, and they suspected nothing till the Flood came and swept all away. It will be like this when the Son of Man comes. Then of two men in the fields one is taken, one left; of two women at the millstone grinding, one is taken, one left.

“So stay awake, because you do not know the day when your master is coming. You may be quite sure of this that if the householder had known at what time of night the burglar would come, he would have stayed awake and would not have allowed anyone to break through the wall of his house. Therefore, you too must stand ready because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

**PROFESSION OF FAITH**

I believe in one God,  
the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the Only Begotten Son of God,  
born of the Father before all ages.  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made, consubstantial with  
the Father;

through him all things were made.  
For us men and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,

*(all bow during the next three lines)*

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the  
Virgin Mary,  
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under  
Pontius Pilate,  
he suffered death and was buried,  
and rose again on the third day  
in accordance with the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory  
to judge the living and the dead  
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,  
the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is adored  
and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and  
apostolic Church.

I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness  
of sins

and I look forward to the resurrection of the  
dead

and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Accept, we pray, O Lord, these offerings we  
make,  
gathered from among your gifts to us,  
and may what you grant us to celebrate  
devoutly here below  
gain for us the prize of eternal redemption.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

The Lord will bestow his bounty, and our  
earth shall yield its increase.

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

May these mysteries, O Lord,  
in which we have participated,  
profit us, we pray,  
for even now, as we walk amid passing  
things,  
you teach us by them to love the things of  
heaven  
and hold fast to what endures.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.