

INTRODUCTION

This week, we are invited to recognize the desire and eagerness of our Lord, to be in our world today, which is so much in need of His presence. The coming of Jesus is real when we allow Him to make it real in us, not in external things but as one family preparing it in our hearts, in our life with a concrete attitude of hope, readiness, joy and love.

Advent is a time of waiting. It is a time for our salvation. The faithful waiting in joyful hope for the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ. In doing so, we are reminded to stay awake, be watchful and alert. For we do not know when the time will come. In the Bible, the Lord may come ***“in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning”***. The call to stay awake is a call to prayer. Prayer enables us to be vigilant. According to an Advent preface, “let us prepare to celebrate His birth so that when He comes He may find us watching in prayer, our hearts filled with wonder and praise. Prayer helps us to put into practice the Word. ***“If we want to encounter Christ this Christmas we are led to Him by the star of the Word of God. It lights up the way to His encounter. Christ is a word that is spoken often only in the darkness, in silence.”*** (Fr. James McTavish, FMVD)

As we prepare for the coming of the Lord, we can encounter the voice in the desert crying out ***“prepare the way of the Lord, make His path straight.”*** (Luke 3:4) Like John the Baptist, we are also called to help prepare a way for the Lord. John reminds us to be faithful in telling others of the love and mercy of God. ***“Our words and life should point to Him.”***

(Fr. James McTavish, FMVD) St. Augustine once said, ***“To prepare the way of the Lord is to be humble.”*** Humility enables us to walk in the truth. It is to look at oneself as the person God wants. Let us seek for the Lord’s will in our lives in humility and obedience.

As we wait for the Lord’s coming, may we remember in our prayer and sacrifices, the sorrowful victims of the recent calamities- the earthquake and Typhoon Yolanda. Pray that in their gift may Jesus be born in their being and bring gifts of hope, joy and love. For next month, we will deepen on this truth that the ‘Word became flesh’. We will start to deepen this as the general view for this week.

MONDAY

Experience Advent in an attitude of listening and deep silence.

“and she gave birth to a son, her firstborn. She wrapped him in strips of cloth and laid him in the manger. There were shepherds camping in the countryside, keeping watch over their flocks by night. Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared to them and said, “Don’t be afraid; I am here to give you good news, great joy for all the people. Today, a Savior has been born to you in David’s town; He is the Messiah and the Lord. Let this be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in clothes and lying in a manger. Just then the angel was surrounded by many more angels, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest; peace on earth for God is blessing humankind.” (Luke 2:7-13)

“For us men and for our salvation he came down; by the power of the Holy Spirit, he became incarnate of the Virgin

Mary, and was made man.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church 456)

Through Mary’s “YES”, the Word became flesh. St. Ignatius of Antioch said the “the great mystery of the childbearing of Mary is discovered only in the silence of God. The mystery is only revealed through love. We are invited to experience Advent in an attitude of listening, of silence in the midst of the noise in this world. Enter into that SILENCE today so as to be prepared in welcoming Jesus in our very beings- the readiness that would bring us closer to Him.

TUESDAY

Seek to be in God’s grace

“The Word became flesh so that we might know God’s love: In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent His only Son into the world so that we may live through Him.” For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church 258)

“The Word became flesh to make us, partners of the divine nature. For this is why the Word became man, and the Son of God became the Son of man: so that man, by entering into communion with the Word and thus receiving divine sonship, might become a son of God. For the Son of God became man so that we might become God. The only begotten Son of God, wanting to make us sharers in his divinity, assumed our nature, so that he, made man, might make men God.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church 460)

God will come as a little baby to share in our humanity and thus we become participants in the divine nature. We see this in the Mass as bread is transformed into the body and blood of Christ; in the love between husband and wife as they bring into this world new life in a baby. ***“Our lives have a supernatural and eternal vocation. Jesus’ incarnation is our ticket of entry into the Trinity. Our life and our living are to be a sharing and participation in the love of the Trinity.”*** (Fr. James McTavish, FMVD)

Has the Word dwelt in your being lately? Seek for God’s grace so that like Mary we will be good, faithful and loving servants of God and sharers in the Trinity’s divinity.

WEDNESDAY

Be ready and prepare the way of the Lord

“I hear a voice crying out in the desert: prepare the way of the Lord, make His path straight. The valleys will be filled and the mountains and hills made low. Everything crooked will be made straight and the rough paths smooth; and every mortal will see the salvation of God.” (Luke 3; 4-6)

John the Baptist was sent by God. His ordinary life became extraordinary as he was sent to testify to the light. He was never afraid to announce Christ. Do you believe that like John, you also have a mission to tell others about Christ--- his kingdom, love, mercy and peace? We can ask the Holy Spirit to guide and enlighten us. Also, our dear Lady can intercede for us through her prayers.

Do you help prepare a way for Jesus as we await for His coming? Do you have the same Trust as John the Baptist? Do your words and deeds pave the way for His coming?

THURSDAY

Let yourself be filled with hope and joy. "A descendant of Jesus will come who will rule the pagan nations and they will hope in Him. May God, the source of hope, fill you with joy and peace in the faith, so that your hope may increase greatly by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Romans 15:12-13)

Oftentimes we are imprisoned in worldly concerns and worries. In times of trial and tribulation, it seems that the world will collapse. Have hope for the Lord is near and as the bible says "Our liberation is close at hand." God desires our freedom. St. Paul encourages us to "always be courageous" if we are held captive by our fears. "Be comforted, my people, be strengthened, says your God." (Isaiah 40; 1)

We should continue to hope in our Lord to be faithful servants. Scripture reminds us 'Be on your guard; let not your hearts be weighed down with a life of pleasure, drunkenness and worldly cares, lest that day catch you suddenly as a trap. For it will come upon all the inhabitants of the whole earth. But watch at all times and pray that you may be able to stand before the son of Man.' (Luke 21:34-45)

Offer your works, joys and difficulties of this day for our grief stricken brothers and sisters who have been victims of Typhoon Yolanda. Say a prayer so that Jesus will comfort them and bless them with courage and hope

so that they can move on and live with joy and peace amidst the sorrow and pain in life.

FRIDAY

Faith of the Centurion

"When Jesus entered Capernaum, an army captain approached him to ask for his help, "Sir, my servant lies sick at home. He is paralyzed and suffers terribly." Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him". The captain answered, "I am not worthy to have you under my room. Just give an order and my boy will be healed. For I myself am a man under orders and I have soldiers under me. And if I say to one; "Go", he goes, and if say to another: "Come", he comes, and to my servant:" Do this, he does it. When Jesus heard this he was astonished and said to those who were following him, "I tell you, I have not found such faith in Israel". (Matthew 8:5-10)

"Faith is an entirely free gift that God makes to man." (CCC162) It is a grace as well as a human act. "Faith seeks understanding" (CCC 158). In the words of St. Augustine, "I believe, in order to understand; and I understand, the better to believe." Scripture says, "Without faith, it is impossible to please God. "Faith makes us taste in advance the light of the beatific vision, the goal of our journey here below. Then we shall see God "face to face", "as he is". So faith is already the beginning of eternal life..." (CCC 163). "It is then we must turn to the witness of faith: to Abraham, who in hope believed against hope; to the Virgin Mary, who in 'her pilgrimage of faith', walked into 'the night of faith' in sharing the darkness

of her son's suffering and death; and to so many others..." (CCC 165)

As Advent draws near, we must persevere in our faith to the Lord. Pray for an increase in faith, trust and hope in Him. We pray for our brothers and sisters who seem to have lost their faith in God after experiencing the recent tragedy (of typhoon Yolanda). May they remember what the bible says "God is with us, Emmanuel".

SATURDAY

The Son of Man will come to save the lost

"If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them strays, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills to go and look for the stray one? And I tell you: when he finally finds it, he is more pleased about it than about the ninety-nine that did not get lost. For your heavenly Father does not wish one of these little ones be lost." (Matthew 18:12-14)

Jesus has a great love for each and every sheep. He knows all our needs and when we are lost, he comes to find us and to rescue us. He loves the stray ones more. As part of the Verbum Dei family, let us ask Jesus to bless us with the grace to be more like him – to reach out to the lost and abandoned sheep. Each one of us has sheep that are entrusted to us – our family, friends, relatives, co-workers and others. Let us seek for God's guidance in trying to be shepherd to others. Remember what our Lord said to Peter: "If you love me, feed my sheep."

In this Advent season, how do you help in reaching out and feeding the lost sheep?

SUNDAY

1st Sunday of Advent

1st Reading: Isaiah 2:1-5
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 122:1-9
2nd Reading: Romans 13:11-14
Gospel: Matthew 24:36-44

Verbum Dei

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in your faith..."

(Romans 15:13)

November 25-December 1, 2013



Objective of the week:

- To prepare this season of Advent with the attitudes that we need to let God be real in our lives.
- To enter in this Advent season as a time of personal preparation and as one community, thinking in the desire of God to be among all peoples.