

FAITH

28 NOVEMBER 2021 | VOL. II ISSUE 1

Diocese of Waterford & Lismore

Celebrating and supporting faith, hope and love
in the heart of the family!



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FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Year C

Sunday Mass Readings

First Reading:

Jeremiah 33: 14-16

Responsorial Psalm:

Psalm 24 (25): 4-5, 8-9, 10, 14

Second Reading:

1 Thessalonians 3:12-4:2

Gospel:

Luke 21:25-28, 34-36

"Stay awake, praying at all times..."



Hear

Grab your Bible and look up the Gospel reading. Don't have one? No worries, you can find this week's readings online [here](#).

Check out [this video](#) of the Gospel for children.

Pray

In the Gospel today we begin the new Church Year (Cycle C). We begin by preparing to celebrate the incarnation of Jesus at Christmas, and to meet Jesus again at His Second Coming. Jesus cautions us to "stay awake", to "watch" because we do not know when that day will come.

Take some time to reflect on the key message of this week's Gospel. Think about the following:

- What is the Holy Spirit saying to you through this piece of Scripture? How do Jesus' words resonate with you personally?
- If I knew that I would meet Jesus tomorrow, or next week, or on Christmas Day - if that day were to be my last day - how would I prepare? Is my heart ready for that event now? What concrete actions is Jesus calling me to, to have a heart that's ready to meet Him at all times? Is there anyone I need to reconcile with, or to forgive?

Talk

Jesus talks about many ways in which we can lose focus of Him and of aiming our lives towards heaven. We can all suffer fatigue from life and from how busy everything gets, especially in the run up to Christmas.

Discuss the following as a family:

- Have you ever made New Year's Resolutions? What were they? Were you able to keep them? If yes, what helped you? If no, what hindered you?
- Advent is the beginning of the new Church year, and a special time to prepare for Christmas and to remember Christ's promise that He will come again. How can we get our home ready for Jesus this Christmas? What can remind us to focus on Him each day? What *New Church Year Resolutions* can we make?
- Jesus tells His apostles that they should not be afraid. How do we know we can trust in Jesus? Where has He shown us that in our family?

Family Challenge!

Consider using the Jesse Tree as a part of your Advent preparation this year - learning a little about Jesus' ancestors each day or week. Watch [The Big Story video](#) for a summary of Salvation History.

Mission: Today we light our first Advent candle – that means Christmas is not very far away! How can you be a light this week? Can you make an extra effort to smile when you feel like being grumpy, or to help others when you'd prefer to play games?

Please email us at faithathome@waterfordlismore.ie [or click the [subscribe](#) button] if you would like to receive Faith@Home direct to your inbox each week!

"To the Heights" Post-Primary / Youth Version also available: click [SUBSCRIBE](#) / email youthministry@waterfordlismore.ie

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STRENGTH AND CONSOLATION

Today is the first Sunday of Advent, which is also the first Sunday of the new liturgical year. The Advent season includes the four Sundays that precede Christmas. Advent is a time of preparation for the coming of the Lord. In this season, we recall two central elements of our faith: the final coming of the Lord in glory and the incarnation of the Lord in the birth of Jesus. The key themes of the Advent season are watchful waiting, preparation, and justice. In this new liturgical year, the Gospel of Luke will be the primary Gospel proclaimed (Lectionary Cycle C). Today's Gospel is taken from the last chapter before the passion narrative in which Jesus is teaching in the Temple. We hear Jesus speak to his disciples about the need for vigilance and prayer as they wait for the coming of the Son of Man in glory. This passage marks the conclusion of a lengthy dialogue in which Jesus predicts the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, warns about the persecution and tribulations to follow, and identifies the signs that will signal the coming of the Son of Man in glory.

The community for whom Luke wrote his Gospel may have believed that they were already experiencing some of the events Jesus described. Most scholars believe that Luke's Gospel was written after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 A.D. At the time, many Christians interpreted this event as an indication that Jesus' second coming was near.

Though Jesus predicts a time of destruction and fear, Jesus indicates that others will be frightened; Jesus' disciples are not to fear, but are to stand tall. Yet Jesus does not promise deliverance from anxiety or tribulations. He encourages his disciples to pray for strength. The early Christian communities did not find consolation in the promise of a utopia, nor should we. Instead, we find in our Christian faith the means by which we witness to God's unfailing love for us in all circumstances.

Jesus' predictions about the end times may sound dire, but in the next paragraph Luke tells us that people woke early to listen to Jesus' teaching in the Temple area. In his person and in his message, those who heard Jesus found strength and consolation. Like the first Christians, we may encounter events and circumstances that could lead us to despair. Through prayer, however, we find strength and consolation in Jesus' words and in his continuing presence with us to endure all things and to witness to the action of God in our world.

adapted from Loyola Press: Sunday Connections

EVENTS

Pilgrimage through Revelation: Wed 7.30
9pm: Oct 20 - Dec 15. Prayer, Teaching / Study, Tea / Coffee at the Foyer of Charity, Dunmore East, Co. Waterford, X91 FC65
www.foyerofcharity.ie
Please book as limited places.
Helen : 086 167802, hellywilliams@gmail.com

Lectio Divina: the praying with the Scriptures, led by the Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, beginning Thurs, September 30th. 2 options: Thurs @ 2pm in St. John's Pastoral Centre / Thurs @ 7:30pm at Sacred Heart Parish Centre. Please register at waterford@ascjusus.org or call 087-4042785

Family Prayer

First Advent Candle:

All-powerful God, increase our strength of will for doing good that Christ may find an eager welcome at his coming and call us to his side in the kingdom of heaven, where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit one God, forever and ever. Amen.

www.xavier.edu

"Advent is the spiritual season of hope par excellence, and in this season, the whole Church is called to be hope, for itself and for the world."
- Pope Benedict XVI -



ARE YOU READY?

In this Gospel passage, we hear some stark and even frightening imagery: Jesus speaks to His apostles about the end-times, the time of God's final judgement. We do not know when this will be and so He cautions us to stay awake, alert and ready. The "coming of the Son of Man on a cloud" should not be a cause for fear for us, if He is someone we know, love and already spend time with. Certainly, the event would be astonishing and awe-inspiring, but for those who follow Jesus and try to live like Him, what a joyful event! In Jewish tradition, the cloud was a symbol for the presence of God. At Christmas we celebrate "Emmanuel", God-with-us. We have to remember that our God is not a distant God, watching us slip up with a frown on His face. No, He is a loving Father who does everything possible to win our hearts and bring us to Heaven. The whole story of Salvation history (which we retell through the Jesse Tree in Advent) reminds us that God never gives up. This is why the Church gives us the season of Advent: to be prepared to celebrate Jesus' first coming in Bethlehem, and His Second Coming, at the end of the world, or just the end of our lives. Let's not waste the time we have, but use it to serve God and others, and be the best version of ourselves!

- [The True Meaning of Advent \(Fr Mike\)](#)
- [TUNE: O come, O come Emmanuel](#)
- [RESOURCE: Are you ready?](#)



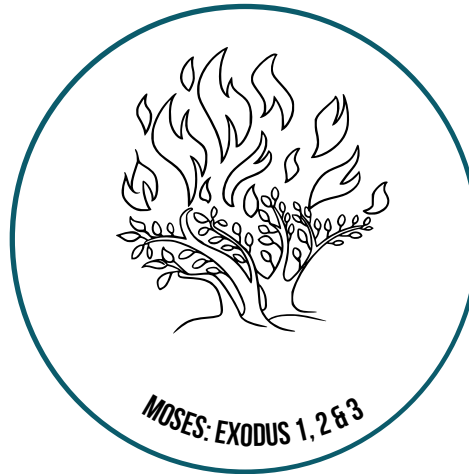
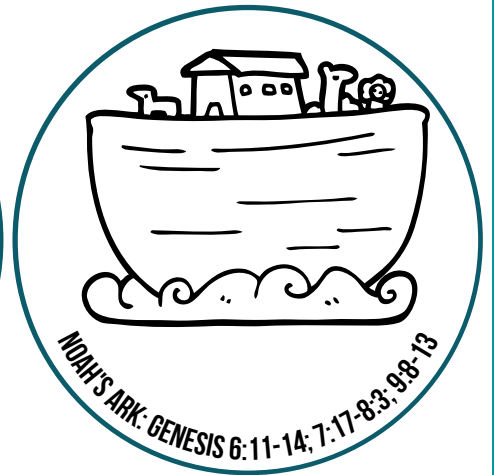
CHECK IT OUT: LOOK TO HIM AND BE RADIANT

Ideas for Catholic teachers, homeschoolers, and catechists. Free Religious Education ideas, crafts, lessons, and printables. Free curriculum about teaching with and about Venerable Fulton J. Sheen with emphasis on the Sacraments, prayer, Mary, and the path to Sainthood. Thoughts on crafts, femininity, and beauty.



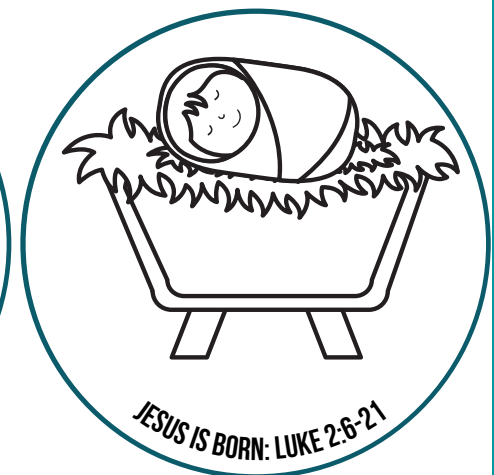
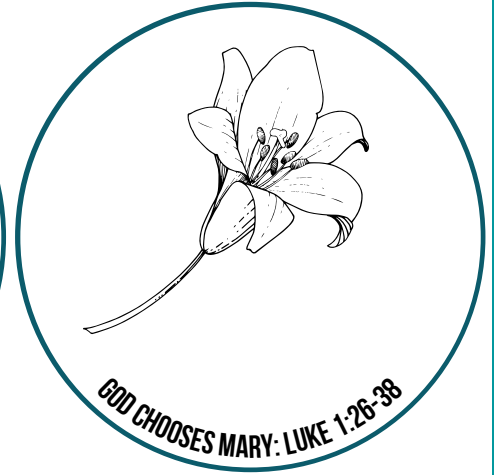
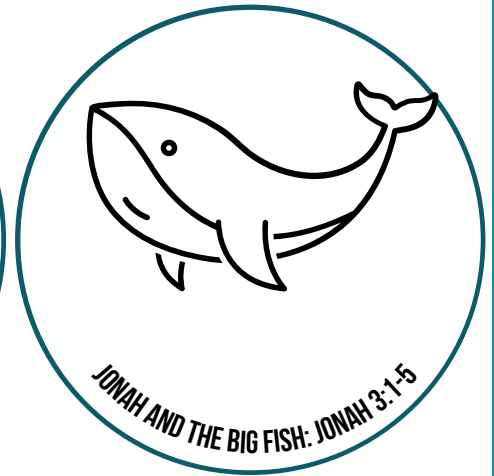
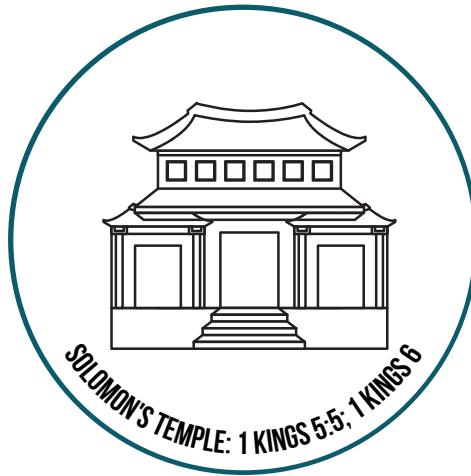
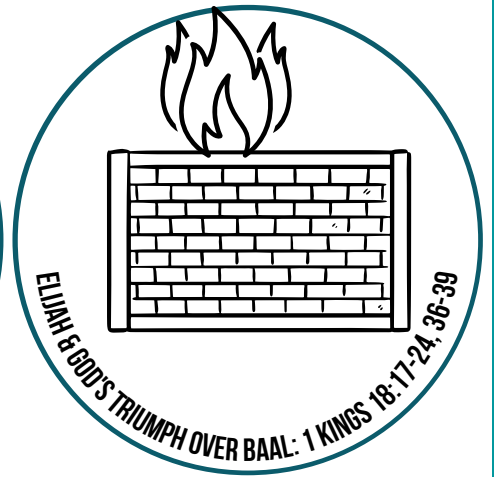
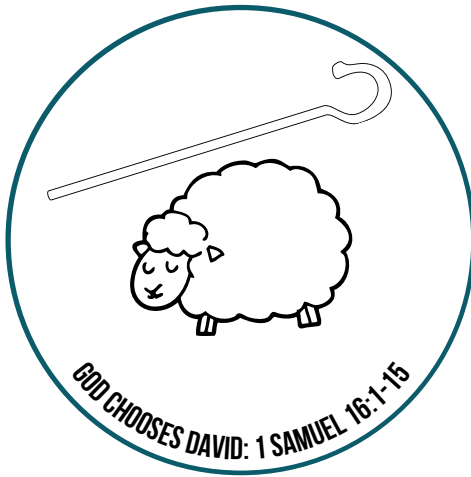
Faith@Home: Kids' Corner Colouring Page!

Colour in these Jesse Tree Symbols throughout Advent to remind you of Jesus' Family Tree!



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CHECK OUT THE
 CATECHISM OF THE
 CATHOLIC CHURCH
 SAYS ABOUT THE
 SEASON OF ADVENT
 CCC 440



LUKE 21:25-28, 34-36

Advent is...
 Hopeful Anticipation
 Expectant Waiting
 Joyful Preparation

Are you ready?

WALKING DEBATE

- CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS SHOULD GO UP STRAIGHT AFTER HALLOWEEN.
- CHRISTMAS MUSIC SHOULD NOT BE PLAYED UNTIL MID DECEMBER.
- CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS SHOULD STAY UP UNTIL THE FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY (OR LATER!)



DO YOU HAVE ANY FAMILY TRADITIONS AROUND DECORATING FOR CHRISTMAS
 / PUTTING UP THE TREE / THE CRIB?

THINK - PAIR - SHARE!



WHAT IS YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE SEASON OF ADVENT?

WATCH THIS VIDEO FROM FR MIKE SCHMITZ, "THE TRUE MEANING OF ADVENT"
 (ASCENSION PRESENTS) AND REFLECT ON THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW



What is Fr Mike's response to people wanting to put up Christmas decorations early:
 what question should people ask themselves?

Advent is a season of preparation: what is the first thing we prepare to celebrate?

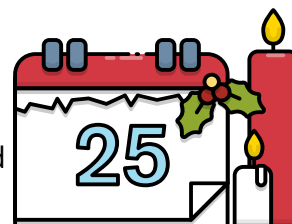
There's a deeper purpose to Advent: what is the second thing we prepare for?

Do we know when this event will happen?

How does Fr Mike explain how it will happen in our lifetimes one way or another?

What stark question does Fr Mike suggest we ask: what could we prepare for as
 if it could happen on December 25th this year?

Fr Mike does not suggest this as a morbid thought. Instead he proposes it would
 give focus to the season of Advent. In what way(s) could it have this effect?



ARE YOU READY?

LUKE 21:25-28, 34-36

How did one of Fr Mike's students put this challenge into action? How easy would you find it to do something like that? What would hinder you? What would be the benefits?

Now Read, Luke 21:25-28, 34-36



In this Gospel passage, we hear some stark and even frightening imagery: Jesus speaks to His apostles about the end-times, the time of God's final judgement. We do not know when this will be and so He cautions us to stay awake, alert and ready. The "coming of the Son of Man on a cloud" should not be a cause for fear for us, if He is someone we know, love and already spend time with. Certainly, the event would be astonishing and awe-inspiring, but for those who follow Jesus and try to live like Him, what a joyful event! In Jewish tradition, the cloud was a symbol for the presence of God. At Christmas we celebrate "Emmanuel", God-with-us. We have to remember that our God is not a distant God, watching us slip up with a frown on His face. No, He is a loving Father who does everything possible to win our hearts and bring us to Heaven. The whole story of Salvation history (which we retell through the Jesse Tree in Advent) reminds us that God never gives up. This is why the Church gives us the season of Advent: to be prepared to celebrate Jesus' first coming in Bethlehem, and His Second Coming, at the end of the world, or just the end of our lives. Let's not waste the time we have, but use it to serve God and others, and be the best version of ourselves!

MISSION!

IF YOU WERE TO TAKE FR MIKE'S ADVICE, AND DECIDE TO LIVE THIS ADVENT SEASON DIFFERENTLY, WHAT CHANGES COULD YOU MAKE? DID ANY OF FR MIKE'S SUGGESTIONS RESONATE WITH YOUR HEART? REFLECT IN PRAYER, AND ASK GOD TO GUIDE YOU. HE KNOWS YOUR HEART AND YOUR DEEPEST DESIRES. HE KNOWS TOO, THE WOUNDS OUR PASTS CAN CAUSE US AND AREAS WHERE WE NEED TO CHOOSE HEALING. CHOOSE ONE THING THIS WEEK, A SMALL OR A BIG STEP - THAT'S UP TO YOU!

PRAYER TIME!

If you have an Advent Wreath, light the first purple candle. If you don't, try to find a tealight or candle you can light, to remind you of the Light of Christ that dispels the darkness of our world and brings Hope that darkness can never quench.

Son of God, You are the light of the world. Shine your light on all our choices this day. Create in us the ability to let your light shine forth for others. We ask this in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen. Ave Maria Press



CREATE A PLAYLIST TO LISTEN TO AS YOU REFLECT ON THE FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

- [O Come, O Come Emmanuel \(Pentatonix\)](#)
- [Help from Heaven \(Matt Redman\)](#)
- [Prepare the Way \(Charlie Hall\)](#)
- [To those who wait \(Bethany Dillon\)](#)
- [Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus \(Meredith Andrews\)](#)
- [While I'm waiting \(John Waller\)](#)
- [Come to save us \(All Sons&Daughters\)](#)
- [I will wait \(Mumford & Sons\)](#)

Click the links for the YouTube videos to listen to some suggestions!



The Big Story: Gospel Project
(Salvation History)



Come Thou Long Expected Jesus
The Skit Guys



Advent in Two Minutes
Busted Halo