

FAITH @Home

3 DECEMBER 2023 | VOL.IV ISSUE 1

Diocese of Waterford & Lismore

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



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Year B 1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

"TO THE HEIGHTS" YOUTH EDITION AVAILABLE ALSO

Sunday Mass Readings

First Reading:

Isaiah 63:16-17, 64:1, 3-8

Responsorial Psalm:

Psalm 79(80):2-3, 15-16, 18-19

Second Reading:

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Gospel:

Mark 13:33-37

So stay awake, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming



image: canva.com

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](#) on the readings for children.

Pray

In the Gospel today we reflect on the second coming of Jesus, and the need to be prepared to meet Jesus whenever that meeting might happen!

- What is the Holy Spirit saying to you through this piece of Scripture? How do these words resonate with you personally?
- Would you be ready in this moment to meet Jesus? Would your heart be prepared?
- The Church in its loving kindness and wisdom each year gives us this season to prepare our hearts for heaven, to check where our priorities lie, to refocus and recommit ourselves to our Christian faith and building a loving relationship with Emmanuel, God with us.
- Consider going to confession this week as a way to clear out the clutter and beginning to prepare for Christmas.

Talk

In today's readings we hear Jesus the need to stay awake and be prepared.

- Think of a time you were caught unprepared. Maybe you were unprepared for visitors, unprepared for a test or unprepared for a work or school project. Share this experience with one another. This Sunday's Gospel tells us we need to be prepared for Jesus Christ's return.
- How can you prepare your heart to welcome Jesus? What prayers or other activities can you incorporate into your family life this Advent in order to spiritually prepare for Christmas this year?

Family Challenge!

Consider making an advent wreath together as a family if you do not have one. For some inspiration on how to make a beautiful home-made wreath watch [this video](#) by [Kendra Tierney](#).

Check out the family prayer ideas on <https://waterfordlismore.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Advent-Christmas-Prayers-for-the-Home.pdf>

STAY AWAKE

Today we begin the season of Advent, which marks the start of a new liturgical year for the Church.

Today's Gospel is taken from the end of Mark's Gospel, the chapter that immediately precedes Mark's account of Jesus' Passion. Having been questioned repeatedly by the scribes and the Pharisees, Jesus is now questioned by his disciples—Peter, James, John, and Andrew—who want details about his prediction of the destruction of the Temple. Jesus answers with many warnings about the difficulties that the disciples will face.

Today's passage comes at the conclusion of Jesus' warnings to his disciples. Jesus emphasizes the need for watchfulness. The Son of Man will come without warning; only the Father knows the exact hour. The disciples must not be caught unprepared when this time comes.

Scholars believe that Mark's Gospel was written around the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70. Mark's audience consisted of Christians who were living in difficult social and political times, times of conflict. They were likely beginning to face persecution as followers of Jesus. In this difficult time, it helped to recall that Jesus had foretold of such difficulties. Early Christian communities took courage from Jesus' warning to remain alert and watchful, and they found in his words a way to persevere through suffering.

Today's Gospel reminds us that Advent is about more than our preparation for the Church's celebration of Christ's birth at Christmas. Advent is also about preparing ourselves for Christ's return in glory at the end of time. Like the disciples and the faithful in Mark's community, we must also stay alert and watchful. Our faithfulness to God, through the good times as well as the difficult times, shows us to be ready for the coming of the Son of Man.

Taken from Loyola Press - Sunday Connection

CHECK IT OUT: **CATHOLIC ICING**      



"The icing on your Catholic Cake!" Lacy, a Catholic mom of 4, runs this resource site to help educate Catholic kids! Arts & crafts ideas, craft ideas for saints, the Mass, the rosary, ideas for how families can celebrate the sacraments and the liturgical calendar, resources for Covid-19 and much more! With an online shop to purchase material, but many resources are also free to download! Updated regularly with new material.




ARE YOU AWAKE?

Can you believe it's Advent already? Where did that time go? In just a few weeks Christmas will be over and we'll be into a new year. But let's not get ahead of ourselves: today is the start of the liturgical new year and we have plenty of time to prepare well for Christmas.

We hear in today's Gospel about the need to stay awake: obviously we literally can't do that, we need to sleep, but what Jesus is talking about is a deeper sense of wakefulness than that. Are we awake to the presence of God in our lives. Are we awake to the real meaning of Christmas? 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!

This week's challenge:

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!

 The True Meaning of Advent (Fr Mike Schmitz)

 Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus (Meredith Andrews)

To the Heights Youth Resource also available



Family Prayer

Heavenly Father, as we begin this Advent give light to our eyes and peace to our hearts. May the Lord find us watching and waiting in joy when He comes. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

EVENTS

Advent Evening of Reflection: The Transforming Power of Love facilitated by Sr Antoinette Dilworth sj, St John's Pastoral Centre, John's Hill, Waterford, Thursday 30th November at 7.30pm. All welcome!

Handel's Messiah: Sunday 3rd December: Mount Melleray Abbey Choir with join with Killeagh Choir to present Handel's Messiah, Part 1. Tickets may be purchased from the shop at Mount Melleray Abbey and ticket price is €15.

Aifreann as Gaeilge i mBaile Chluain Meala i Seipéal Naomh Olibhéar: Dé Luain 4 Nollaig ag 7.30 i.n. (tar éis Bheannacht na Naomhshacraiminte). Feicimid ansin thú!

Youth 2000 Christmas Retreat: Newbridge College, Co. Kildare. 8 - 10 December. For 16 - 35 year olds. Donation only. Great talks, music, prayer and an opportunity to meet young Catholics from all over Ireland. More info on www.youth2000.ie

Live Crib in St. Mary's Parish, Cahir: December 16th, Saturday, 4-8pm with the Servant Sisters of the Home of the Mother.

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