

FAITH @ Home

1 DECEMBER 2024 | YEAR C: 1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Diocese of Waterford & Lismore

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

"TO THE HEIGHTS" YOUTH EDITION ALSO AVAILABLE

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



image: Canva

"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](#).



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?

Family Prayer



Lighting 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

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 from staying faithful to them?
- **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.

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.

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this
out

LOOK TO HIM AND BE RADIANT

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CARLO'S CORNER

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

To the Heights Youth Resource also available

EVENTS

The Web of Life: Advent Reflection

St John's Pastoral Centre, John's Hill, Waterford 4th December, 7pm facilitated by Sr Antoinette Dilworth rsj

Youth 2000 Christmas Retreat

For 16 - 35 year olds. Friday 6th - Sunday 8th December, Newbridge College, Co. Kildare. Talks, Workshops, Music, Prayer, Fellowship. Donation only. More info on www.youth2000.ie

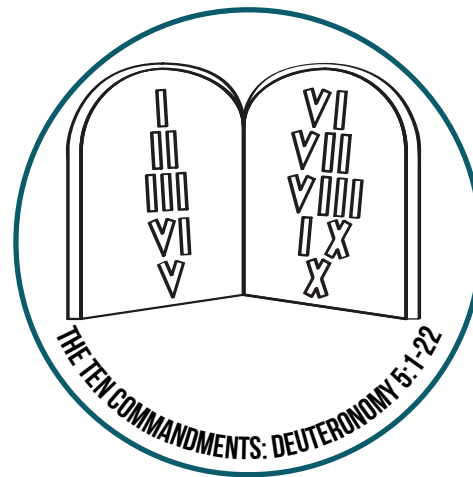
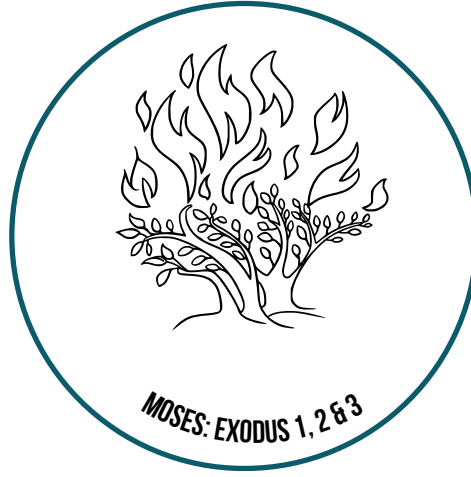
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