



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



YEAR A: MATTHEW 24:37-44
YEAR B: MARK 13:33-37
YEAR C: LUKE 21:25-36

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?

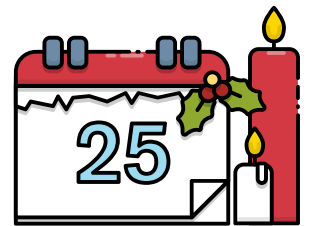
There's a deeper purpose to Advent: what is the second thing we prepare for?

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?



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?



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!



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



The Big Story The Gospel Project Kids



Come Thou Long Expected Jesus The Skit Guys



Advent in Two Minutes Busted Halo