

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Light of All Being

Creator God,
author of all life and light,
in this season of anticipation
you call us to recognize your light
in our midst,
your love in our darkness.
Lead us from the darkness of despair
into a light of hope and peace.
Wake us from the shadows of our
troubled lives
into a light that dispels our fears
and concerns.
May your presence maintain
our wakefulness,
as we prepare for your coming more deeply
into our hearts.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ,
your Son,
who lives and reigns in the unity of the
Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Sunday, November 27, 2016

Come, Let Us Walk in the Light of the Lord!



Today's Readings: Isaiah 2:1–5; Psalm 122:1–2, 3–4, 4–5, 6–7, 8–9; Romans 13:11–14; Matthew 24:37–44. The day of salvation is near, and the darkness in which we often find ourselves does not need to govern our lives. The readings on the First Sunday of Advent are a call to be alert. They urge us to shake off our drowsiness, find a way through the darkness, and follow the light. From Isaiah, in the First Reading, we are called to “stream” together to the house of the Lord, where all nations will lay down their weapons of destruction. That vision is our call to live in the light of God’s Kingdom. On this opening day of Advent, we can take that first step in our homes by setting up an Advent prayer area, with a purple cloth and an Advent wreath. The purple is the

dark background in which the light, growing through the season, is both a reminder and a call to move forward together to work to establish God’s Kingdom of peace.

All three readings today summon us to wake up and to discard some kind of darkness, turning it into a life-giving light. In his Letter to the Romans, St. Paul speaks of a darkness brought about by our conduct, a reminder that when we put on Christ, when we clothe ourselves in conduct guided by the Lord, we wear the light of Christ as armor. In this dark season of the year, when our daylight hours are never enough, it can be too easy to let the darkness and the night be our guide.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, November 28

Promise of the Kingdom

This first Monday in the season of Advent is full of promise for all peoples, who will “eat with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.” Each meal as a family, and each community’s gathering at the Eucharist, is a reminder of the Kingdom of God. As you light your Advent candle before your evening meal, name your hopes and promises for each member of the family. *Today’s Readings: Isaiah 4:2–6; Psalm 122:1–2, 3–4b, 4cd–5, 6–7, 8–9; Matthew 8:5–11.*

Tuesday, November 29

Lions, Lambs, Wolves, and Children

Advent is all about looking forward to the coming of the Messiah. Isaiah provides a vision of the messianic kingdom, a place and time when the most unlikely of animals and individuals will live together in peace. It is a fulfillment of the gifts of the Spirit. This season is an opportunity to work on a relationship of peace with an unlikely person. As you gather around the Advent wreath, share one relationship you find unlikely, and include that in your prayer. *Today’s Readings: Isaiah 11:1–10; Psalm 72:1–2, 7–8, 12–13, 17; Luke 10:21–24.*

Wednesday, November 30

St. Andrew, Apostle

St. Andrew, one of the first Apostles called by Jesus, lived his call to discipleship by proclaiming Christ’s Good News to others. In the First Reading we hear: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” We have a wonderful challenge during this season of hopefulness to not just proclaim Good News but to bring Good News to others. *Today’s Readings: Romans 10:9–18; Psalm 23:1–3a, 3b–4, 5, 6; Matthew 4:18–22.*

Thursday, December 1

Listen and Act

Jesus calls us to both hear his words and act upon his message. The first step is to listen. Take time this Advent to pay attention when others speak and to work to discern the proper time to act. As a family, take time to listen to one another and to work together to prepare for the coming of the Lord by reaching out to others beyond the comfort of your home. *Today’s Readings: Isaiah 26:1–6; Psalm 118:1, 8–9, 19–21, 25–27a; Matthew 7:21, 24–27.*

Friday, December 2

“Yes, Lord”

When Jesus asks the two blind men if they believe he can heal them, they quickly reply, “Yes, Lord.” The season of Advent invites us to seek Jesus with hearts wide open and full of faith. Find time to visit and pray a healing prayer with a sick friend. The season of Advent is often a time for groups to visit hospitals and nursing homes, singing carols and moving on. This Advent, take time to pause and focus on those who not only need a momentary cheering up but a comforting word of faith and friendship. *Today’s Readings: Isaiah 29:17–24; Psalm 27:1, 4, 13–14; Matthew 9:27–31.*

Saturday, December 3

St. Francis Xavier, Priest

Missionary and evangelizer Francis Xavier was responsible for the spread of Christianity in Asia and India, baptizing hundreds of thousands. His zeal for his faith prompted him to do as Jesus in the Gospel: go to all the towns and villages, proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom. The coming of the Kingdom is for all peoples. As you pray at the end of this first week of Advent, remember the Lord’s Prayer invites us to the Kingdom here on earth “as it is in heaven.” *Today’s Readings: Isaiah 30:19–21, 23–26; Psalm 147: 1–2, 3–4, 5–6; Matthew 9:35–10:1, 5a, 6–8a.*

