

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

November 27, 2011

Matthew 13:35--37

- Jesus' message and life was to make a difference and save the world. That's the call—to do the world a world of good. Stay awake—see how you can make someone else's life that bit better. We need to believe that each of us can make a difference to our families, to the neighbourhood, to the school. One way to keep in touch with God.
- Advent can be a time to make sure---through prayer, through Mass, through helping the very poor—that we keep in touch with God. We allow God's grace and care to flow through us.

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF NOVEMBER 28TH

Tuesday	7:00 p.m.	Advent Evening Prayer
Wednesday	9:00 a.m.	Mass "Installation" of our Bishop at Cathedral
Friday	9:00 a.m.	Mass followed by Adoration & Benediction
Saturday	7:00 p.m.	Gerry Lance and deceased relatives of the Lance & Norlock Families by Mary Lance
Sunday	9:00 a.m.	
	11:00 a.m.	Des Bolton by Frances Murphy

WEEKEND COLLECTIONS: \$2,198.50 Thank You!

We begin the Advent Season...

Yes, Christmas is coming. However, the Church goes about it in a different way compared to the commercial and entertainment world all around us. And it is difficult not to get caught up in it in some way. But the Church prepares for Christmas by really preparing for it instead of jumping the gun on it. This preparation takes the form of the Advent Season. Observing that season is not easy; it goes a bit against the grain. And yet, a proper observance of Advent may go a long way in helping us maintain a specifically Christian meaning of Christmas. In fact, it will also show up aspects of the Christmas Mystery that the secular observance of Christmas keeps "safely buried" or does not know what to do with.

So let us go "a little heavy" on the Advent Season and try to hold back on "Christmassy things". If the coming of Christ (we are not talking about Santa) is the focus for us as Christians, then we need to be aware of what Jesus Christ has come for and, in many ways, still needs to come for: a world that cries out for justice, for peace, for light. The prophets of the Old Testament – whom we hear in the first readings of Mass – keep insisting on that. And it is the sort of coming that our world at large still very much stands in need of, but also our own more immediate world and we ourselves.

We would not want the observance of Advent to be limited to what we do or see or sing in the church building. How about making an effort to observe **Advent** at home too? A very helpful tool for that is the use of the **Advent Wreath** at home. How about huddling around it and spending some time while using the daily reflections that you find in the bulletin as an insert. These are taken from **Catholic Update**.

Our Sunday bulletin includes yet another insert, one on the **Advent Season**. That one too may be helpful in getting a sense of what the Church intends with the Advent Season. In addition, we have a few booklets with Advent Reflections/Meditations by such spiritual authors as Mother Teresa, Henri Nouwen, and Dianne Bergant. They are \$2.00 each and you find them at the entrance of the church.

The Advent Banners in the Church...

It is interesting to see how the Church understands the Advent Season. In one of its official documents it says: "*Advent has a twofold character: as a season to prepare for Christmas when Christ's coming to us is remembered; as a season when that remembrance directs the mind and heart to await Christ's Second Coming at the end of time. Advent is thus a period of devout and joyful expectation.*"

The banners that you find in the church during the Advent Season try to fall in line with that. The central banner depicts ***the Coming of the Son of Man, Christ***, on a cloud with glory and power, a favourite image to make us look forward with hope to Christ's coming in glory. Indeed, Christ's second coming or his coming in glory is not to be feared, but to be looked forward to in joyful hope, as one of the prayers at Mass has it.

The banner to the left depicts ***Haggia Sophia***, Lady Wisdom, an image of God-with-us, Emmanuel. Lady Wisdom is surrounded by four Old Testament prophets who, in striking images, spell out what the promised Messiah is coming for – something we hear proclaimed in the first reading of the Advent Season: a new kind of world of which Jesus Christ is the God-given cornerstone of; a kind of world that is still to be constructed in many ways.

The banner on the right depicts the concrete way in which God's promise of salvation begins to be fulfilled with Mary and Joseph on their way to Bethlehem.

Our Diocese welcomes its new Pastor, Bishop Paul-André Durocher

This coming Wednesday our new Bishop, Paul-André Durocher, will be officially "installed". The cards of admission that we had been given were gone quickly. Whether we are there or not, we can also at home pray for him that the Spirit of Christ Jesus may generously assist him in his shepherding service among us.

The Two Versions of the Sunday Missal are available

The Church Year starts with the first Sunday of Advent. That also applies to the two versions of the Sunday Missal we have. One is the ***Living with Christ. Sunday Missal*** with which many of us are familiar. It would be great if all our homes would have one (\$5). And then there is the newer version of ***Sunday Missal for Young Catholics***. Do not let the title mislead you. The way it is put together with many helpful explanations makes it a real treat (\$8) for young and old.

Next Sunday, December 4: *The Guignolée*

That is also part of parish life. In this case, we work together with other parishes, more especially through the services of St. Vincent de Paul Society, to collect donations that will benefit the less fortunate in our area. It starts after the 11:00 a.m. Mass. Our candidates for next year's Confirmation and First Communion are expected to participate in it as well so that they may be exposed to that dimension of the Christian life too.

Participation in this church activity is not limited to members of St. Vincent de Paul and to our younger candidates for Confirmation and for First Communion. It is open to all parishioners. In fact, all parishioners are encouraged to take part in it. Let us make it an inter-generational adventure! Look who can benefit from it...

Right after the 11:00 a.m. Mass a little lunch is prepared in the church hall, and then we can get on our way.

Thursday, December 8: *Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary*

Mary is one of the principal Advent figures. We honour her and let ourselves be inspired by her so that she may teach us to become Advent people. There is no one like Mary who can show us what it is to be a disciple of Jesus. Pope Paul VI called her "the most prominent disciple of Jesus". Since she is so important to us as Christians, we would not want to let this feast of Mary go by without a special service devoted to her. The format of this service is some reflections on Mary interspersed with some Marian hymns from our hymnal. The service begins at **7:00 p.m.** and will take about 30 minutes.

Tuesday, December 13, 7:00 p.m.: *Advent Penitential Service*

There are several ways of observing the Advent Season and of preparing for Christmas, Coming together as a parish community to reflect on how much we as individuals and as a parish community stand in need of what God offers us in Jesus Christ can be very beneficial. In the Bible and in several prayers of the Church we are called a sinful people. That is not meant as a put-down. Rather, it is a way of saying that without the tender mercy of our God and without the forgiveness of our sins we cannot be the kind of people God wants us to be. In this case, God's tender mercy and God's forgiveness are not in question. They are, if you wish, "*a given*". It is so beautifully expressed in the words of Zechariah:

*"By the tender mercy of our God,
the dawn from on high will break upon us.*

*to give light to those who sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace.” Luke 1:78-79*

What needs attention is our readiness to acknowledge our need for that mercy and forgiveness from God. How do we express that readiness? It is by means of our willingness to identify, with the help of God’s Spirit, the areas in our personal lives and in our parish community that stand in the way of God’s Kingdom of love, peace, justice. To bring that in focus is the purpose of the communal **Advent Penitential Service** which is being planned for **Tuesday, December 13.**

For those who want to follow that up with the individual celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation some time-slots for that will be posted shortly.

Be patient when the priest tries to find his way in the new Missal

There are several layers to the implementation of the new Roman Missal. We have begun with the spoken responses on the part of the congregation. They are put together on the cards or pamphlets we find in the pews. So we are on our way. Now we are getting ready for the texts that are normally sung by the congregation: the acclamations in the Eucharistic Prayer, the Gloria etc. for which new musical settings had to be composed. They are found in the “supplemental little hymnal “*Celebrate in Song*” which is also found in the pews. This first Sunday of Advent the priest is supposed to start using the new version of the Presidential Prayers (such as the Opening Prayer, the Prayer after Communion, the Eucharistic Prayer etc.) that are brought together in the rather bulky Missal from which he proclaims these prayers. Here the changes are quite significant and many. It will take a little time to become at ease with them. But in due time we’ll get used to them.

CATHOLIC WOMENS’ GUILD: A big **Thanks** to all parishioners for helping to make our bazaar a success. Also, to the hard working members of the CWG and the associate “men members”. Our bazaar made a profit of \$6,580.00. These funds will be used in St Mark’s parish where needed. **Thank you!!!** The winners of our raffle are Bev Cote – the \$50.00 Gift Certificate; Claire Rochford – the handmade sweater; and Fleurette hantigny – the beautiful quilt. Congratulations to all the winners.

MEALS ON WHEELS needs volunteer part-time delivery drivers for Monday, Wednesday or Friday mornings. If you are interested please call Cal Mott 819 684-8523.

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK: Kindly remember Gabriel Filiou, Lucy Lafontaine, Don Daly, and their families in your prayers.

PRAYERS & SYMPATHY: Our prayers and sympathies are extended to the Daley/Massie families on the loss of Rita, Pément family on the loss of Leonard, Rita Danis on the loss of her brother Harold, Chartrand family on the loss of Richard.

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