

## ADVENT SUNDAY – 2020

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

1Cor 1:3-9

Mk 13:33-37

A young monk approached an elder asking where he could look to find spiritual wisdom. The elder said, "Here." "When will it happen" the monk asked. "It is happening right now," was the reply. The monk asked, "Why do I not experience it?" "Because you don't look." "What should I look for, and what at, asked the monk?" "Anything your eyes light upon" the elder replied. "Do I have to look in a special way?" "No," said the elder, "To look you must be here. The problem with you is that you are mostly somewhere else." J Chittister, *Wisdom Distilled* from the Daily p.201 1991 Harper SanFrancisco.

Advent is a season in which many Christians do not look because they are mostly somewhere else, be that Christmas preparations, parties or they are just too apathetic to look for anything. Who knows, maybe this year more of the faithful *will* look and realise that Advent is not simply the countdown to Christmas but a season in which we are called to reflect of Death, Judgement, Heaven and Hell and check our spiritual preparedness for that Judgement. whenever that happens, by ensuring we are in a right relationship with God.

Isaiah's people were in Exile when it dawned on them that they had abandoned God and had indulged in a life of rebellion and sin against him by assimilating themselves into the Babylonian culture and even worshipping false gods. Yet instead of repenting and seeking forgiveness, they blamed God for not *making* them do what they knew they should do. That is a common human trait, and nowadays because many people consider God to be irrelevant in their lives or deny his existence, sin is not a reality for them. When things go wrong, all they can do is blame everybody else including the very God they deny exists.

So if we are to look in Advent, we need to look at our relationship with God and be ready and watchful because none of us know when our personal end or that of the world will be.

Jesus made this point in the parable about the master who travelled abroad and left his servants with a list of tasks for them to do. The doorkeeper was to stay alert because the master may return unexpectedly. Jesus' message to the whole Church is to stay awake.

Watching and waiting for the Lord does not mean cruising along in our faith until there is some action. It means that we must ensure that our faith is not weak, false or simply lukewarm. As Jesus promised, those who persevere to the end will be saved and take their place among the righteous at the heavenly banquet. In the meantime, God's grace will be sufficient for us to get on with our ministries, win others for him and recognise his presence in our lives and in that of others. Look for and recognise God in every moment and place.

The French priest, Jean Pierre de Caussade who died in 1751 wrote , "[There is not a moment in which God does not present Himself under the cover of some pain to be endured, of some consolation to be enjoyed, or of some duty to be performed. All that takes place](#)

[within us, around us, or through us, contains and conceals His divine action.](#)" (Treatise 1, ch 2, section 1).

To grow in wisdom and Enlightenment we must be focussed and look, and not be somewhere else. This Advent look, watch, wait, persevere and be ready, for we do not know the day nor the hour when the Son of Man will return.

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