

Homily I Week Advent Yr. C  
November 29, 2015

PAX

*And they will see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, look up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.*

At this time of year time seems to have a different perspective. Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas seem to come a long a lot faster. As a child it seemed as if Christmas would never come. Advent of course was a good start at moving closer to Christmas. However, those four weeks seemed like an eternity. In an attempt to move things along we thought lighting all the Advent candles at ounce would make it go faster. We thought opening all those little doors on the Advent calendar would push Christmas that much closer. Who would do such silly things...

On this first Sunday of Advent, the Church invites us to reflect on they mystery of time, eternity, and the end of time. We are told to be watchful. About being ready for Christ's triumphant coming out of eternity into the world of time. His coming in the light of glory on earth will outshine the sun, moon and stars. The Gospel tells us *There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on earth nations will be in dismay, perplexed by roaring of the sea and the waves.* The colorful language and imagery of His coming in glory seem frightful to us. In fact, Jesus says flat out, *people will die of fright.*

Even though the coming of Christ seems fearful at first with these images of celestial changes and utter confusion. These apocalyptic prophecies of great terror and destruction, of cosmic events in nature also inspire us to greater faithfulness. Our faith tells us that Christ has triumphed over all darkness, sin, and evil that we see in our world today. He has already won the battle. But we called to prepare our hearts by striving to be holy. In our preparing for Christ we begin to have a share in His great light of glory already here on

earth. We prepare by stockpiling not things of this world but God's grace in our hearts. We prepare by growing in union with Christ Jesus. We prepare by forming our hearts in devotion in private prayer, devotion to Our Blessed Mother, by taking time to be alone with Our Lord in Blessed Sacrament, and most of all by participating in the Holy Eucharist.

Our renewed preparation to follow Christ might start with a sense of obligation or fear. But as we grow closer to Him we begin to follow Him out of love. Our fear is purified by love. We are faithful to the gospel out of a real desire to be closer to Him. We prepare ourselves in time for the coming of Christ.

In Advent we are called to have a broadened perspective. This broadened perspective is not of a political or ideological sense. It's one of past the anxieties and troubles of this world and focusing on the world to come. When we focus on Christ we begin to live in love of the gospel. We are transformed. Our new way of living becomes contagious. In the way we live by God's grace we have an effect on the world around us. Others begin to know Christ by the way *we live and move and have our being*. We prepare for Christ coming in our hearts in our spiritual life and we also then moved by the Spirit prepare in charitable ways, the second reading tells us, *May the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we have for you*. We are called to in this time to practice works of charity in feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and loving our neighbor in doing so we share the love of Christ. Love in the real sense, *of desiring what is best for the other*. The love Christ showed by dying on the Cross-and the love He shows by coming to us in the Sacrament of the Altar. When we live in His grace we become sharers in the reconstruction of creation as a whole. By our spiritual preparation, our broadened perspective has an effect on the whole world.

In this holy season we wait for Jesus to come into our hearts spiritually at Christmas. We also prepare our hearts to meet Him in His glory and in eternity. Christ calls us to be vigilant because, *we do not know the day or hour when the Son of Man will come in glory*. Let us take advantage of our time in this Advent. We most likely will not become saints over these quick four weeks. But we can renew our holy intentions of moving closer to Christ. In this time of watchfulness may we lose all fear and deepen our union with Him- He who came into the world as a little child to bring salvation. Let us pray in this holy Eucharist to grow closer to Him, to know Him, to Serve Him in love, and to wait for Him in hopeful expectation.