

Church of the Divine Love

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

NOVEMBER 28, 2021

10:15 A.M.

HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

THE WORD OF GOD

Processional Hymn #56 – **O come, O come, Emmanuel vs.1&2**

Opening Acclamation page 355

Collect for Purity page 355

Gloria (S-280 in hymnal) page 356

Collect of the Day - lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson: **Jeremiah 33:14-16**

Psalm 25:1-9

Second Lesson: **1 Thessalonians 3:9-13**

Gradual Hymn #57 – **Lo! he comes, with clouds descending**

Gospel: **Luke 21:25-36**

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze

Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form IV page 388

Confession of Sin page 360

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn #71 – **Hark! the glad sound!**

Doxology (sung)

The Great Thanksgiving:

Eucharistic Prayer A	page 361
Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal)	page 362
The Lord's Prayer	page 364
The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer	page 337
The Communion of the People	
Communion Hymn – #59 – Hark! a thrilling voice is sounding	
Post Communion Prayer	page 365
Prayer for Peace – on insert	
Prayer of St. Francis	page 833
Dismissal Hymn #616 – Hail to the Lord's Anointed vs. 1,4,5	

Sermon Sunday November 28, 2021

Jeremiah 33: 14-16; Psalm 25: 1-9; 1 Thessalonians 3: 9-14; Luke 21: 25-36.

Sisters and brothers in Christ,

I want to talk with you today about the future. The First Sunday of Advent always focuses our attention on the future. It's a theme that runs through today's gospel (**Luke 21:25-36**) and the entire Season of Advent.

Many of you know that the word advent comes from the Latin word meaning "to come." So, something or someone is coming to us in this season. We most often think of what's coming as Christmas and the birth of Jesus. And it is but I also think it is bigger and more than that. In today's gospel Jesus speaks of the "Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory." I think that's a metaphor for the future. I'm thinking of Advent as the coming of our future, and a time when we prepare, as best we can, if we can, for that future. What comes up for you when you look toward or think about your future?

We all have a future, and we all deal with it in our lives. Some look toward to the future with fear, anxiety, and worry. "People will," Jesus says, "faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world." When have you felt like that? Others look to the future with hope, eagerness, and optimism. They stand up and raise their heads with anticipation and expectancy. When have you jumped out of bed ready to get the new day started, and excited about the possibilities of what might be? My grandmother called it being "journey-proud." She said she was too excited to sleep. She wanted to get going. When have you been journey-proud? Most of us, I suspect, live with both of those outlooks. Which predominates for you today? What is the future you dread? What is the future you want and anticipate? What parts of your life are fearful and what parts are journey-proud? Regardless of which it is, the force of the future is to prevent the present from closing in on us, from closing us up. Advent pries open the present by promising us the possibility of something new, the chance of something different, something that will transform the present into something else.

I am not talking about the foreseeable future but the unforeseeable future. We all have both. Most nights my wife or I will ask, What's your plan for tomorrow? What have you got going on? Or we will talk about what we want to do on the weekend, for summer vacation, or even retirement. We are talking about the foreseeable future, the future we are planning and have some control over, the future toward which we are working. With prior planning, common sense, some work, and a bit of luck we can have a reasonable expectation that the future will be as we plan. It's within our reach and control. While we can plan and prepare for the foreseeable future, the unforeseeable future comes "like a thief in the night." It takes us by surprise. It's completely unknown and unimaginable. We can't understand or make sense of it. We are at our wits' end, seemingly pushed beyond the limits of what is possible, without power or control. We are not prepared for what is happening. How can you prepare for what you cannot see, know, or understand? It's those times in our life when we say things like, not in my wildest dreams could I have imagined or guessed that, no, that's not possible; it can't be, God only knows.

I'm betting every one of you knows what I am talking about. I am betting every one of you has felt the unforeseeable future pry open and forever change your life. Surely, that's how Mary felt at Gabriel's announcement that she would give birth to the Son of God. She felt the impossibility of a future she never imagined. "How can this be?" Haven't you also asked that question? And let's not forget the context for today's gospel. Jesus and the disciples have just left the temple, the center of religious and civic life, when Jesus says, "Not one stone will be left upon another, all will be thrown down." It's something they never could have imagined. Hasn't there been a time when you felt the stones of your temple being thrown down? Unimaginable, unforeseeable? Yes, but not impossible. The unforeseeable future always holds the possibility of the impossible. The unforeseen future is, however, always unfolding, always calling us forward, always asking of us a response. So, let's not be too quick to name or judge it as good or bad, joyful, or sorrowful, desired, or unwanted. We just don't know. We cannot name the impossible.

To name or judge the impossible would be to relativize it and close ourselves off from the advent of God. In Advent the unforeseeable future comes to us as a chance for something new, for a new birth, for the expectation, the hope, the hope against hope, in a transforming future. Advent does not promise an escape from the circumstances of our lives or the world. The promise of Advent, the possibility of the impossible, is revealed and fulfilled in the midst of those circumstances. The foreseeable future falls within the scope of our power and possibilities. Things are manageable and, for the most part, we know what to do. With the unforeseeable future, however, there are no guarantees, no contracts, or warranties. There is a lot of risk. That's why Jesus says, "Be on guard that your hearts are not weighed down.... Be alert at all times. Pray. He's reminding us that the impossible is the realm of faith, hope, and love. That's how we are to live when heaven and earth are passing away, when there is "distress among the nations, and when the powers of heaven are shaken.

That means we do not give up when the sands of our life are shifting under our feet. We do not give up when we come unhinged, when our ability is driven to its limit, when we are overwhelmed, or exposed to something we cannot manage or foresee. And we do not give up on ourselves or each other. I am not talking about rosy optimism or determined perseverance. I am talking about staying open to the possibility of the impossible, to a future we could never imagine. I am talking about the call of faith, hope, love, courage, compassion, beauty, forgiveness, healing. Aren't those the things that speak to your heart and tug at your soul? I don't know what the future holds for you and neither do you. But I know this. Those things I just listed: faith, hope, love, courage, compassion, beauty, forgiveness, healing,

are the voice of Advent. They speak the possibility of a new life, a transformed life, and they call to us from the most improbable, unforeseen, and impossible places of our lives. They will pull you into and through the rest of this day. And when you wake up tomorrow morning, guess what? They will be there, waiting for you and calling your name.

So, what if we looked on our lives and our world and we began to read and understand the signs in our Advent stories as sprouting leaves? What would we see? What would it mean? It would mean that the kingdom of God is nearby. It would mean we are entering a new season. We would see new life and new growth. We would produce new fruit. We could open the doors of our life with new courage and confidence. We could look on the world with a new sense of compassion and hope. We would be strengthened to do the work God has given us to do. Yes, the Advent seasons of our lives can be long, difficult, and painful. But we never face those seasons without the signs of hope and reassurance, signs that point to the one who is coming. **Amen.**

1 ADVENT

10:15 AM HOLY EUCHARIST, II (also on zoom)

THRIFT SHOP CHRISTMAS SALE IS OPEN FOLLOWING THE SERVICE

MONDAY

8:00 AM AA MEETING

WEDNESDAY

7:00 PM AL-ANON MEETING

THURSDAY

10AM-2PM THRIFT SHOP CHRISTMAS SALE

8:00 PM AA MEETING

SATURDAY

10AM-2PM THRIFT SHOP CHRISTMAS SALE

2 ADVENT

10:15 AM HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II (also on zoom)

SUPPORT THE FOOD DRIVE – DROP-OFF IN THE KITCHEN

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Give to all who suffer the refreshing waters of your compassion and healing. Make them dwell in the safety of your care even in the midst of all that troubles them. Especially we remember before you:

Girard Bishop	Chrissy Neville	Bob Curley
Nathan Treadwell	John Loubengeiger	Del
Chris Dickson	Kate Jones	Julia
Michael Echevarria	John Rocco	Robert Sweat
Martinisi Family	Michael & Family	Warren
Charlotte H.	Bernie Walther	Sylvia
Mo (Rachael)	Bill Conklin Sr.	Laura
Anthony Paribello	Barbara Curran	Taylor
Ciara	Elodie	Gabriel
Aidan	Christopher & Family	

Victims of Natural Disasters

People of Haiti & Missionaries who were Kidnapped

Help us to speak words of encouragement and offer deeds of kindness to them. Bring us with them, into the unending joy of your kingdom. Amen

Prayer before Worship

Almighty God, who pours out on all who desire it, the spirit of grace. Deliver us, when we draw near to you,

from coldness of heart and wanderings of mind, that
with steadfast thoughts and kindled affections we may
worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ
our Lord. Amen.

Hymn to be sung during the consecration:

Father I adore you,
Lay my life before you,
How I love you.

Repeat twice with second verse starting with Jesus
and third verse starting with Spirit.

Prayer for Peace

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn
But the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So
mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that
all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince
of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominions
and glory, now and for ever. Amen