

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
December 3, 2023

Gospel: (Mark 13:33-37)

Jesus said to his disciples: *“Be watchful! Be alert. You do not know when the time will come. It is like a man traveling abroad. He leaves home and places his servants in charge, each with his own work; and he orders the gatekeeper to be on the watch. Watch therefore; you do not know when the lord of the house is coming, whether in the evening, or at midnight, or at cock crow, or in the morning. May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to all: Watch!”*

Reflection:

Advent symbolizes our human condition. We long. We hope. We rejoice in what we have. We yearn for what we have not. Even nature conspires during Advent time to make us feel our human incompleteness. As the darkness of winter descends, we long for the light. As cold numbs us, we yearn for the warmth of God’s love. As plants and leaves die, sometimes with a final flash of brilliance, we hope for resurrection and new life. The Lord is about to create something new. Isaiah cherishes this theme. He repeats it again and again. “See, I am doing a new deed, even now it comes to light: Can you not see it? Yes, I am making a road in the wilderness, paths in the wilds.” (Maloney, Seasons in Spirituality, p.49)

Words of Father Robert Maloney, C.M.

“I encourage all the members of the Vincentian Family to give themselves wholeheartedly to the Church’s preferential option for the poor. Whatever choice in life others make, our is for the poor. Today, therefore, I ask each one to find the way to best touch the lives of the poor...we should honestly identify the way in which our life and works will have a real effect on the poor, the most abandoned, in society. Also, one of the signs of our trust in the Lord, and our self-gift to him, will be faithfulness to personal prayer daily, even in the midst of our multiple activities. We have a wonderful vocation! We are called to live among the poor as signs of boundless hope, with profound confidence in the Lord’s presence, his love, his creative power. “Behold I make all things new”. With you, in this Advent time, I pray that the Lord “when he comes may find us watching in prayer, our hearts filled with wonder and joy.” (Maloney, Seasons in Spirituality, p. 50-51)

Discussion: *(Share thoughts on the readings after a moment of silence)*

How does Advent speak in your heart? What does Advent call you to do?

Closing Prayer:

Lord, you come to bring courage and hope,
 -may we proclaim your coming with our lives.
You come as a visible sign of love,
 -help us to serve the poor with compassion.
Strengthen us to the end by your grace,
 -so that we may always be on guard, watching and alert. Amen.

