

# Link to Liturgy



## Watch! 1st Sunday of Advent

*Link to Liturgy provides faithful resources which use the latest audiovisual means alongside traditional means to evangelize & catechize thus linking life to the Gospel & the Gospel to life. Sign up Free to Link to Liturgy.*



### Lessons and Discussions

#### **Page 4 – Patience is a Virtue**

*“...you do not know when the Lord of the house is coming”*

#### **Page 6 – Preparing to receive Jesus**

*“May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping.”*

#### **Page 10 – Leaving Us with Shepherds**

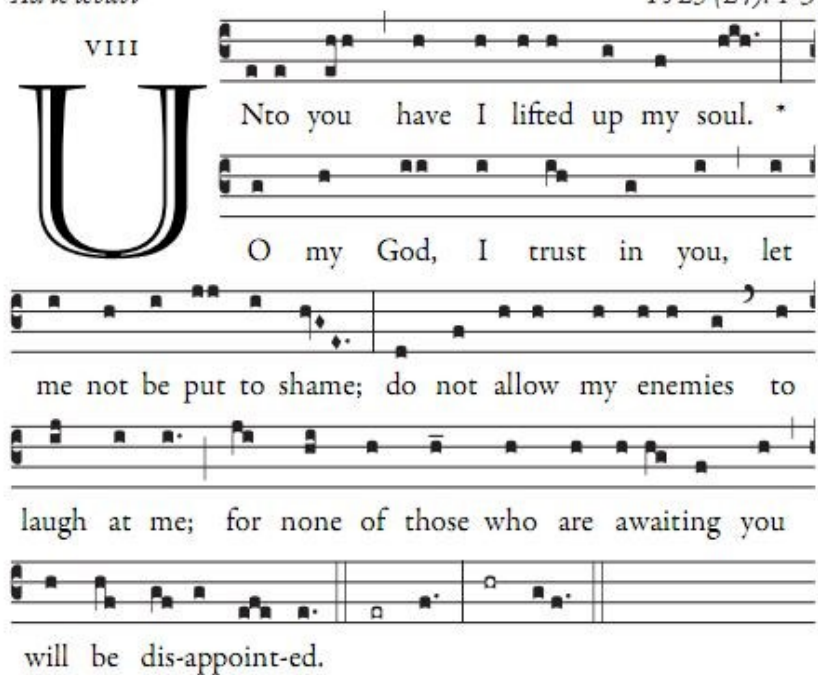
*“He leaves home and places his servants in charge.”*

**Entrance Antiphon (Ps 24:1-3) – Simple English Propers**

*This should be chanted so that the time of prayer, study and discussion can be made sacred. Another song can be substituted, but should have the same theme.*

*Ad te levavi* *Ps 25 (24): 1-3*

VIII



U Nto you have I lifted up my soul. \*

O my God, I trust in you, let

me not be put to shame; do not allow my enemies to

laugh at me; for none of those who are awaiting you

will be dis-appoint-ed.

**Source:** <http://www.ccwatershed.org/>

**Alternate options:**Hymns

Hark! A Herald Voice Is Calling

O Come, Divine Messiah

**Collect – Roman Missal**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen

Grant your faithful, we pray, almighty God, the resolve to run forth to meet your Christ with righteous deeds at his coming, so that, gathered at his right hand, they may be worthy to possess the heavenly kingdom. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your

**“The End” Notes**

- [1] Modern Catholic Dictionary pg. 408
- [2] Modern Catholic Dictionary pg. 408
- [3] Sermon 175, 3, 3.
- [4] In Conversation with God 1, 2.1
- [5] Modern Catholic Dictionary pg. 260
- [6] St. Augustine, Sermon 6
- [7] *General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM)* 160
- [8] GIRM 160
- [9] GIRM 23
- [10] Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium*, 6
- [11] In Conversation with God 1, 7.2
- [12] John Paul II, Letter to all priests, 8 April 1979, 7
- [13] St. Augustine, Sermon 46, On the Shepherds

**Marian Antiphon – Alma Redemptoris Mater**

V

**A** L-ma \* Redemptó-ris Ma-ter, quæ pérv-i a cæ-li  
 porta manes, Et stella ma-ris, succúrre cadénti súrge-  
 re qui cu-rat pópu-lo: Tu quæ genu-ísti, na-tú-ra mi-  
 ránte, tu-um sanctum Ge-ni-tó-rem: Virgo pri-us ac po-  
 sté-ri-us, Gabri-é-lis ab o-re sumens illud Ave, pecca-  
 tó-rum mi-se-ré-re.

O loving Mother of our Redeemer, gate of heaven, star of the sea,  
 Hasten to aid thy fallen people who strive to rise once more.  
 Thou who brought forth thy holy Creator, all creation wond'ring,  
 Yet remainest ever Virgin, taking from Gabriel's lips  
 that joyful "Hail!": be merciful to us sinners.

Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
 Amen

**Gospel Reading – Mark 13:33-37 – Roman Missal**

*NOTE: In the Roman Catholic Tridentine Lectionary this Gospel is not read*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark  
 - Glory to you O Lord

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 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 cockcrow, or in the morning. May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to all: "Watch!"

The Gospel of the Lord.  
 - Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

**Spiritual Reading – Office of Readings**

From *St. Cyril of Jerusalem*

We do not preach only one coming of Christ, but a second as well, much more glorious than the first. The first coming was marked by patience; the second will bring the crown of a Divine Kingdom.

In general, whatever relates to our Lord Jesus Christ has two aspects. There is a birth from God before the ages, and a birth from a virgin at the fullness of time. There is a hidden coming, like that of rain on fleece, and a coming before all eyes, still in the future. At the first coming He was wrapped in swaddling clothes in a manger. At his second coming He will be clothed in light as in a garment. In the first coming He endured the cross, despising the shame; in the second coming He will be in glory, escorted by an army of angels. We look then beyond the first coming and await the second. At the first coming we said:

*Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.* At the second

we shall say it again; we shall go out with the angels to meet the Lord and cry out in adoration: *Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.*

The Savior will not come to be judged again, but to judge those by whom He was judged. At His own judgment He was silent; then He will address those, who committed the outrages against Him, when they crucified Him and will remind them: *You did these things, and I was silent.*

His first coming was to fulfill his plan of love, to teach men by gentle persuasion. This time, whether men like it or not, they will be subjects of his kingdom by necessity. The prophet Malachi speaks of the two comings. *And the Lord whom you seek will come suddenly to His temple:* That is One coming.

### **Responsory - Office of Readings**

Watching from afar, I see the power of God advancing, and the whole earth enveloped in a cloud. Go out to meet him crying:

– Tell us if you are the One who is to reign over the people of Israel.

All peoples of the earth, all children of men,

– rich and poor alike, go out to meet him crying:

Shepherd of Israel, hear us, you who lead Joseph's race like a flock,

– Tell us if you are the One.

Throw wide the gates, you princes, let the King of glory enter,

– who is to reign over the people of Israel.

### **Patience is a Virtue – Lesson and Discussion**

*“...you do not know when the Lord of the house is coming”*

The start of Advent is one of preparation and anticipation. We anxiously await the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. When we were little kids, we could almost not contain ourselves because of the gifts we could not open until Christmas Day. We had to wait patiently for the day to arrive so that we could open them. The people of God were waiting ever patiently for over two thousand years for their promised Messiah.

In a world full of immediate gratification and constant connection with everyone around us, we have lost what it means to be truly patient. An old saying that many our parents may have said is, “Good things come to those who wait”.

**What is Patience?** We have all heard it said, “Patience is a

### **Music - Awake My Soul by Mumford and Sons - POP CULTURE CONNECTION - 3:27**

<http://youtu.be/DHWsKTSdS74>

While the verses are coded, we see someone who is struggling with things in front of him. He cries out to God to awaken his soul in order to invest his love in the life he truly wants. For us as Catholics, we must invest our life in the life of Christ so that we may have eternal life with Him. We should pray that God will awaken our souls so that we can be ready to receive Him.

### **Profession of Faith or Popular Devotion – Prayer for the virtue of patience**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Patience is a virtue of the Lord: He awaits the return of His children. Forgive my trespasses Oh Lord Jesus, For many times have I tested You. I deserved the wrath of Your hand, But You saw greater things for me: Your patience has been enormous! Grant me a droplet of such endurance, That I may abolish my impious impatience, Refraining from using unpleasant words, And always reflecting Your serenity. Great is the Lord Jesus in His ways!

R. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Lord's words to Saint Peter, "Feed my lambs...Tend my sheep... Feed my sheep." (cf. John 21) In these words there are two different nouns, "lambs" and "sheep" and two different verbs, "feed" and "tend". The Church has taught that Saint Peter's threefold confession, "yes, I love you" (cf. John 21) is a reversal of his threefold denial of Jesus during His Passion. The word "love" also changes each time it is asked by Our Lord. It would be similar to someone asking if we like someone, then if we love someone and finally would we die for someone.

The Church has taught that Saint Peter and his successors, the Popes, have universal jurisdiction over the whole, universal flock. The Bishops are called to continue the mission of Christ. Christ is Prophet, Priest and King. The Church, under the lead of the Bishops, teaches, heals and governs. We can see the word "feed" as the role of teaching as the Bishops feed our souls with the truth. The word "feed" can also be taken literally as in the role of the priest giving us our daily bread, the Eucharist. We can see the word "tend" as the role of governing, especially in the area of moral responsibility. The Bishops "tend" to us by bringing us the Sacraments of healing. With fewer than 300 Bishops in the United States, the Bishops do not do this alone, but have the help of their brother priests and the service of the deaconate.

Priests also have a special role in being watchful and alert of their flock in their parish. They help uniquely in the Sacraments in order to help sustain us in our patience to be ever watchful. In our darkest hours, when we fail to stay awake and fall into sin, priests help through the Sacrament of Penance to awaken our soul. "They (priests) remind us that their priestly ministry... is ordered, in a special way, to the great solicitude of the Good Shepherd, a solicitude for the salvation of all men... that men may have life, and have it more abundantly, so that none may perish, but that they may have eternal life." [12]

We too as laypersons are asked to be the servants and look out for our brothers and sisters in Christ to help them, correct them and awaken their soul. The role of a good shepherd is one of patience, humility, "quickness of mind" (1 Peter 5:2), and responsibility because "the bad shepherd leads even his strongest sheep to their death." [13] Let us keep watch, awake and alert so that we do not lead ourselves or anyone else to death.

virtue", but many people do not know what this truly means. Patience is "a form of the moral virtue of fortitude. It enables one to endure present evils without sadness or resentment in conformity with the will of God. Patience is mainly concerned with bearing the evils caused by another." [1] In our Catholic faith, patience is a fruit of the Holy Spirit that we receive at Baptism and Confirmation. It grows when we are practicing its brother virtue, the gift of fortitude. As we read here patience is to give us the strength and perseverance to ride out the evils that are done to us and to be accepting to whatever God wills for us during the times of trials.

#### **VIDEO - JellyTelly Kids Talk - Patience - POP CULTURE CONNECTION - 0:51**

<http://youtu.be/MniS2ptFODU>

The kids in this video talk about the struggles, but also the rewards of being patient. The very end of the video really helps explain why it is good to be patient.

#### **MOVIE - Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory - POP CULTURE CONNECTION - 2:39**

<http://youtu.be/TRTkCHE1sS4>

This answers the question of why we should be patient. In the video before this one (JellyTelly) the young boy says that if we are not patient then we will have demanding or "bossy" people. The Willy Wonka video shows how demanding or "bossy" we can become.

**Are there different levels of patience?** Sometimes we hear or say, "My patience is growing thin." We can have different grades of patience: "The three grades of patience are: to bear difficulties without interior complaint, to use hardships to make progress in virtue, and even to desire the cross and afflictions out of love for God and accept them with spiritual joy." [2] If we are truly practicing patience we not only endure hard times in our lives, but we are able to let go of complaining and accept the cross for the love of God.

**What if someone has no patience?** This is like saying someone has no talents. God made us, and if we are baptized Christians, we all have patience within us. We do not follow every impulse we have. We all have gifts; we just have to discover what they are, and work hard at them. Working on our talents takes lots of practice and lots of patience, especially when we do not see the results the way we want them to be. If someone is impatient,

especially in times of distress or pain, they should look to Christ as their example. In Jesus' Passion, we see Him bear the burden of the injustice set against not only Himself, but his followers as well. He took it all "in patience, as a means of instructing our own patience"[3].

**How is God so patient with us?** "God is Love" (1 John 4:8, 16), and "This love is poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us." (Romans 5:5) If we are practicing the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we will bear good fruit, one of which is patience: "...the fruit of the Spirit:...love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control." (Galatians 5:22-23) Remember God is infinitely patient with us. He is the Father, and He waits for the Prodigal Sons, us, to come back to Him. He endures all of our sins so that we can repent and come back to Him in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Christ is patient with us in the Most Blessed Sacrament. He waits and even longs for us to be with Him at Mass and/or Adoration. He waits patiently to take our burdens and struggles, wanting to place them on His shoulders, but we must go to Him and ask this from Him. God never forces Himself on us but is willing to place patience upon us if we ask of it from Him.

God is patient with us. The fact that He waits for us gives us the freedom and the chance for conversion. "And consider the patience of our Lord as salvation." (2 Peter 3:15) The people of Israel were expected to be patient, but this patience was a time for conversion. Those preparing to enter the Church or preparing to receive a Sacrament, or a person who has asked the Church for the declaration of nullity regarding their marriage are expected to be patient. All of these things are chances for conversion. As a Church we are the bride awaiting our groom. This waiting and longing, this hunger and thirst that we have, is a time for conversion.

**In what areas of our life can we better work on patience? What steps are we going to take in order to build up our patience? How can we notice when we need to be more patient?**

**Preparing to receive Jesus – Lesson and Discussion**

*"May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping."*

Advent is a time in the Liturgical Year when we are especially

Book of the Prophet Jeremiah, he prophesied, "I will set shepherds over them who will look after them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed; neither shall they be missing, says the Lord." (Jeremiah 23:4) Even if we fail to be watchful and fall asleep, our Bishops are there to awaken us and help us be watchful.

**How many Cardinals and Bishops are in the U.S.?** Currently there are 12 Cardinals and 269 Bishops. These numbers include the active Cardinals and Bishops, not those that are retired.

**What is the difference between a Bishop, an Archbishop and a Cardinal?** First of all, they have one thing in common, they are all priests. A Bishop is in charge of a diocese, which has several parishes in it. An Archbishop, is a bishop that is in charge of an archdiocese, which has been given that title because the Catholic population is very large or because of spiritual or historical significance. Cardinals are Archbishops or Bishops that have been elevated and given the title "prince of the Church". They are in a group called the College of Cardinals. This group is of aid to the Holy Father, the Pope, and it is this group that elects the new Pope. Each Cardinal usually is responsible for an archdiocese or diocese. It is important to note that the Pope is the Bishop of Rome, and that all his brother Bishops must meet with him once every five years. In the visit to Rome, the Bishop not only meets with the Holy Father, but also visits the tombs of Saint Peter and Paul, the pillars of the Church, to ask for their intercession.

**Who is the gatekeeper?** The Church "is a sheepfold whose one and only door is Christ. It is also a flock of which God himself is said in prophecy to be the Shepherd, and whose sheep, though undoubtedly led by human shepherds, are nevertheless guided and fed continually by Christ himself, the Good Shepherd and Prince of shepherds, who gave his life for his sheep." [10] The Church is ever watchful as the gatekeeper to help us see the Lord and enter through the door of Christ.

**Who is the head servant?** As Jesus points out in the parable, certain servants have certain tasks and responsibilities. Jesus established shepherds to watch the sheep and assigned them to various tasks including putting one shepherd above all here on earth, Saint Peter, the first Pope. "Together with the Pope, and in communion with him, are the bishops to whom we pay similar homage as successors to the apostles." [11] Remember our



Jesus is extremely important, and how we practice this Most Blessed Sacrament says a lot and could effect what we believe about the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.

**What do we do after we receive?** We have just received our Lord. We are asked to take some time in joyful silence in thanksgiving for this awesome gift. “Silence should be observed at the designated times as part of the celebration... at the penitential rite and again after the invitation to pray, all recollect themselves; at the conclusion of a reading or the homily, all meditate briefly on what has been heard; after communion, all praise God in silent prayer.”[9]

As we prepare ourselves to welcome Christ in our lives once again for the Christmas Season, let us also prepare ourselves every week to welcome Him into us sacramentally in the Eucharist.

### **Leaving Us with Shepherds – Lesson and Discussion**

*“He leaves home and places his servants in charge”*

In the Gospel reading Jesus tells us to be watchful and alert! Then he gives a simile of a man leaving his home in the charge of his servants, and giving them tasks. When Jesus resurrected and ascended into Heaven He left the Church in the charge of His servants, the Apostles. This authority and command to care for the Church, has been passed down to the Bishops for over two thousand years.

**How are the Bishops the servants?** Pope St. Gregory the Great coined the term “Servant of Servants”. The Bishops are the ones, who are at the service of Christ. Jesus told the Bishops to be the shepherds of His flock. While the story of the Gospel reading is near the end of Jesus’ earthly life, it is read today in order to prepare us for Advent. It is to call us to be alert and ready for the coming of the Lord, because the world was asleep when the Son of Man came into this world, and only a few shepherds found Him. At the time of the Gospel reading, he tells us and the Apostles to be alert.

As mentioned, the Bishops are the shepherds who follow the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ, who said, “I am the good shepherd” (John 10:11). A shepherd was required to be at all times with his flock, watchful and alert. He was to be on the lookout for wayward sheep or a predator in their midst. In the

focused on being prepared to receive Jesus. We prepare to receive Him in the manger at Christmas, we prepare to receive His at His second coming – the end of time. We are also mindful of preparing ourselves to receive Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament.

**How should we prepare to receive Jesus?** At Mass we say, “Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.” (Luke 7:1-10) The more we truly prepare ourselves for Our Lord, the more we realize how truly unworthy we are to receive Him, but we come to Him in the Eucharist because we know by his Body and Blood we will be healed of our sins and gain everlasting life. The Eucharist, “... is not there as a reward for the strong, but as a remedy for the weak. And we are all weak and in some degree ailing.”[4]

The coming of Christmas brings excitement and a sense of profound humbleness. **Why?** Because God humbles Himself to take on human flesh and to be like a human in all things except for sin. Jesus then takes it a step further and humbles Himself for us in the simple forms of bread and wine. We are to take on that same humility when we are preparing to receive Him.

**What is humility?** “The moral virtue that keeps a person from reaching beyond himself. It is the virtue that restrains the unruly desire for personal greatness and leads people to an orderly love of themselves based on a true appreciation of their position with respect to God and their neighbors. Religious humility recognizes one’s total dependence on God; moral humility recognizes one’s creaturely equality with others. Yet humility is not only opposed to pride; it is also opposed to immoderate self-abjection, which would fail to recognize God’s gifts and use them according to his will.”[5]

[\[See also Link to Liturgy Lesson - 12 Steps of Humility.\]](#)

The centurion demonstrated great humility in saying that he was not worthy of Jesus. We too must be the same because, “Humility was the door by which Our Lord entered to take possession of what was already his own.”[6] Jesus comes to feed us. If we are humble of heart, He will claim once more what was already his own, our hearts.

**How should I prepare to receive Communion at Mass?** In the

season of Advent we prepare ourselves for Christmas. Likewise, before receiving Jesus in the Eucharist we should prepare ourselves even before coming to the Church. We do this by fasting an hour before coming to Mass (unless for medical reasons) to remind ourselves we are hungry for the Bread of Life. We should also arrive before Mass is to begin to prepare our hearts and minds.

During the Mass we should not look at ourselves as individuals, but as a community together engaged in the Mass directing our souls toward God. The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (GIRM) instructs us on how we should act during the Mass. We should actually be participating in every aspect of the Mass. An example of preparing ourselves to receive Communion at Mass is at the preparation of the gifts. The gifts that are brought to the altar, the bread and wine, are the elements Christ used. In Advent we can reflect on the gifts the Magi brought at the Epiphany, and how these related to Christ. The gold was for Jesus as royalty; the frankincense was for Jesus as prophet, and the Myrrh was to be the burial spice. However, before He was to die though, Jesus gave us Himself under the appearances of bread and wine.

#### **What do I do to right before I receive Communion at Mass?**

As we go up the aisle to receive Jesus, we be in the frame of mind of understanding what we are about to undertake; the King of Kings and Lord of Lords is going to come to us and into our body to bring us everlasting life. Jesus is coming to strengthen us by His very Body and Blood. We should act accordingly by being reverent upon exiting the pew and going up to receive Jesus. Before receiving the Eucharist "...the communicant bows his or her head before the Sacrament as a gesture of reverence and receives the Body of the Lord from the minister. The consecrated host may be received either on the tongue or in the hand, at the discretion of each communicant. When Holy Communion is received under both kinds, the sign of reverence is also made before receiving the Precious Blood." [7] It is important to note that the preference of the Church is to receive on the tongue. Pope Benedict XVI, during his Masses at St. Peter's had the people receive the Eucharist on the tongue while kneeling.

**See Also Link to Liturgy Lesson - The Eucharist: Reception on the [tongue while kneeling](#)**

#### **Is it permitted to genuflect before receiving Communion?**

The United States Catholic Council of Bishops has said the norm is to bow before receiving. However, they have not indicated whether one can or cannot genuflect before receiving Communion. In *Inaestimabile Donum*, the Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship noted that, "When they receive Communion standing, it is strongly recommended that, coming up in procession, they should make a sign of reverence before receiving the Sacrament. This should be done at the right time and place, so that the order of people going to and from Communion is not disrupted" The main principle is, if someone were to genuflect it should be reverent and not be disruptive.

**How should I receive Jesus in the Eucharist?** "The norm for reception of Holy Communion in the dioceses of the United States is standing. Communicants should not be denied Holy Communion because they kneel. Rather, such instances should be addressed pastorally, by providing the faithful with proper catechesis on the reasons for this norm." [8] The norm of which the Church is speaking is in regards to the Ordinary Form (Novus Ordo) of the Mass. In the Extraordinary Form (Latin or Tridentine) of the Mass, the norm would be to kneel to receive. In the Byzantine Rite, the people stand to receive. The Body is in the chalice and the priest literally feeds the communicant the Body and Blood using a spoon and gently drops the Body and Blood in the communicant's month.

**Does it matter how we receive?** Yes. Our posture and attitude mean everything. If we are quickly walking up the Communion aisle hurried along, we are rushed when we approach our King. One of the reasons for kneeling is that we have to stop, wait, and then receive. It is as if we are keeling to be knighted by Christ our King. For the ladies it is as if they are kneeling to be crowned by their King. When we receive on the tongue, we are vulnerable, humble, like a little child being fed by "Our Father". In the Byzantine Rite, the communicate is literally fed and very often the congregation will kiss the hand of the priest from which their spiritual food came. We are like little birds, being fed by the mother bird. We only have to open our mouths. Is it better to take something or to receive something? We teach children and have been taught not to grab, but to wait until we are given something. A priest once said that receiving on the tongue is total reception, while receiving in the hand is not a total reception, because the communicant still has to take the host to his mouth. The reception is of the Body and Blood of