

**1. Read** — Read the verses slowly and prayerfully several times. Write down any words or phrases that seem to stand out:

**2. Meditate** — Now begin to reflect on the verses and ask God what it means and how he wants to speak to you through the passage. **God what are you saying to me through this?**

**3. Pray** — Respond from your heart to what God has been saying to you. **What do you want me to know?** Write down your prayer to him or record whatever he says to you.

**4. Contemplate** — Be quiet before the Lord enjoying His presence.  
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**How is God calling you to act in response to what he has shown you?**

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# Quick Connect

**What is the Gospel saying? Luke 21:25-28, 34-36** — Pg. 1  
**What is the Church saying Past and Present?** Pages 1-3  
**What is God saying to you through this passage?** Page 4

## **Gospel Reading – Lk 21:25-28, 34-36 – Roman Missal**

Jesus said to his disciples: “There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on earth nations will be in dismay, perplexed by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will die of fright in anticipation of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. But when these signs begin to happen, stand erect and raise your heads because your redemption is at hand.”  
“Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy from carousing and drunkenness and the anxieties of daily life, and that day catch you by surprise like a trap. For that day will assault everyone who lives on the face of the earth. Be vigilant at all times and pray that you have the strength to escape the tribulations that are imminent and to stand before the Son of Man.”

## **Spiritual Reading – Office of Readings – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent – Cycle C** From a catechetical instruction by Saint Cyril of Jerusalem, Bishop *On the twofold coming of Christ*

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. Malachi, the prophet, speaks of the two comings. And the Lord whom you seek will come suddenly to his temple: that is one coming. Again he says of another coming: Look, the Lord almighty will

come, and who will endure the day of his entry, or who will stand in his sight? Because he comes like a refiner's fire, a fuller's herb, and he will sit refining and cleansing. These two comings are also referred to by Paul in writing to Titus: The grace of God the Savior has appeared to all men, instructing us to put aside impiety and worldly desires and live temperately, uprightly, and religiously in this present age, waiting for the joyful hope, the appearance of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. Notice how he speaks of a first coming for which he gives thanks, and a second, the one we still await. That is why the faith we profess has been handed on to you in these words: He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. Our Lord Jesus Christ will therefore come from heaven. He will come at the end of the world, in glory, at the last day. For there will be an end to this world, and the created world will be made new.

### **Conversion: Heart and Soul – Lesson and Discussion**

*“Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy”*

We are called to conversion. Conversion is not only needed but imminent if we are to share in the eternal glory of Jesus Christ. Conversion, because it is change, is difficult and it includes pain and sadness.

“Interior repentance is a radical reorientation of our whole life, a return, a conversion to God with all our heart, an end of sin, a turning away from evil, with repugnance toward the evil actions we have committed. At the same time it entails the desire and resolution to change one's life, with hope in God's mercy and trust in the help of his grace. This conversion of heart is accompanied by a salutary pain and sadness which the Fathers called *animi cruciatus* (affliction of spirit) and *compunctio cordis* (repentance of heart). (1451, 368)”[1]

**What is affliction of spirit?** To understand this we can look at the Latin words *animi cruciatus*. *Animi* means “at the heart”. This is our very being, our soul, the core. *Cruciatus* means pain or torture. This is where we get the words “excruciating” and “crucifixion.” Athletes go through a type of pain or torture in order to perfect their bodies of the event for which they train. In like manner, the Christian goes through pain or torture in order to perfect their heart and soul. Our Lord, although He did not need either conversion or perfection, went through the pain and torture of crucifixion. Why did He do this? He underwent the pain and torture, not so that we would not have to, but rather so that we would be able to. For we only have the strength to endure the pain and torture necessary for our conversion because we are crucified with Christ. As the priest says in the Mass it is only, “with Him, through Him, and in Him” that conversion takes place. Jesus knew that we could not do this alone and so He was crucified so that we might as Saint Paul says be “crucified with Christ; yet I live, not longer I, but Christ lives in me; insofar as I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who has loved me and given himself up for me.”[2]

**What are the five things necessary for a good confession?** Examination of Conscience. Sorrow for Sin. Resolve to not sin again. Confession to a Priest. Penance.

**Which of the five corresponds to affliction of spirit?** Sorrow for sin, the resolve to not sin again, is the correspondent to affliction of spirit. What a beautiful gift to feel sorrow for sin. If we were to cut our self but were never to feel the pain, we might bleed to death. If we sin, separating our self from God and were never to feel the pain, we would remain separated from God, spiritual death. Physical pain and spiritual pain are necessary, because they indicate that there is a problem which needs healing. “Penance requires...the sinner to endure all things willingly, be contrite of heart, confession with the lips, and practice complete humility and fruitful satisfaction.”[3]

**What is repentance of heart?** Once again we can look at the Latin *compunctio cordis*. *Cordis* is our heart. *Compunctio* is to sting. Repentance of heart is a sting to the heart. Insects are very small and can go unnoticed until they sting us. Once they sting us, they seem to be all that we notice. The sting therefore brings about a recognition. The human heart and it's inclination to sin, which we call concupiscence, can sometimes go unnoticed. Repentance is that sting, the prick or pain that enables us to not only recognize our heart, but change our heart. Jesus says in the Gospel, “Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy.” Our hearts will not become drowsy if we are repentant experiencing the “sting” of the heart.

### **What are some ways in which God “stings” our heart with His love?**

We spoke of affliction of spirit being the crucifixion of the spirit. Repentance of heart is a sting or prick to the heart. Repentance of heart also is tied to the crucifixion of our Lord, for it was at the crucifixion that the Roman soldier not only pricked the heart of our Lord but drove a lance through His Sacred Heart. From this wound, blood (Eucharist) and water (Baptism) flowed forth. This blood and water are necessary for our repentance. If our Lord's heart was pierced, how can we expect our own heart to not be pricked?

The De Profundis (Out of the Depths) are the first words of Psalm 130. This Psalm is used in the Liturgy during the Introit (Entrance Antiphon) for the 10<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time and is an option for Funeral Masses. It is also used in the Offertory Antiphon for the 33<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time and the Communion Antiphon for All Souls. Repentance must be “from the depths”. “The spiritual tradition of the Church also emphasizes the heart, in the biblical sense of the depths of one's being, where the person decides for or against God.”[4]

### **“The End” Notes**

[1] Catechism of the Catholic Church - 1431 [2] Galatians 2:19-20

[3] CCC - 1450 [4] CCC - 368 [5] CCC - 2612 [6] 1 Thessalonians 5:17-22