

## **First Sunday of Advent – Cycle A**

**December 1, 2019**

**Christ the Good Shepherd, OCC**

**Reflection by Father Charles Blanchard**

First Reading: Isaiah 2:1-5

Psalm: 122:1-2, 3-4, 4-5, 5-6, 6-7, 8-8

Second Reading: Romans 13:11-14

Gospel: Matthew 24:37-44

Today, you and I begin our yearly **pilgrimage** through the events of our salvation history starting with the preparation for the birthday celebration of Jesus and ending with the reflection on his glorious “second coming” as judge at the end of the world.

Today, you and I enter the Advent season where the readings call us **To Stay Awake** and **To Be Alert!**

Welcome to Christ the Good Shepherd! To our enduring parishioners and new found-friends, you are welcome to hear God’s word and be nourished at this Table where there is no partiality. Welcome to “The Small Church with a Big Heart”!

Advent means coming where you and I are invited to meditate on Jesus’ first coming in history as a baby in Bethlehem, his daily coming into our lives in mystery through the Sacraments, through the Bible and through the worshipping community and finally his Second Coming at the end of the world to reward the just and to punish the wicked.

Today, we see the traditional signs of Advent in our Church: violet vestments and hangings, dried flowers or plain green plants

and the Advent wreath. These signs remind us that we must prepare for the rebirth of Jesus in our hearts and lives, enabling him to radiate his love, mercy, compassion and forgiveness around us..

In today's Gospel from Saint Matthew, Jesus warns us of the urgency **of vigilant preparation** on our part that we may meet him as our Judge both at the end of our lives on earth and on the day of the Last Judgment when he comes in his glory.

Jesus reminds us of how the unrepentant and ill-prepared evil people were destroyed by the flood in the time of Noah and of how a thief would break in and plunder the precious belongings of an ill-prepared house owner.

Using the additional examples later, Jesus repeats his warning for us to be vigilant and well-prepared all the time, doing the will of God by loving others.

My sisters and brothers, we need To Stay Awake and Be Alert while spiritually preparing for Christmas by beginning each day praying for the strength and power of the Holy Spirit to prepare ourselves for Jesus' rebirth in our lives; by offering our daily work to God for His glory; by seeking reconciliation daily with God and our sisters and brothers; and by trying to see the face of Jesus in everyone we meet today, tomorrow and beyond and sharing with them God's Peace and Love.

Let's collectively Stay Awake and Be Alert this Advent Season.

Gracias de Dios para todos!