

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent  
November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
Cycle B

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading:** Isaiah 63:16b – 17, 19b; 64:2 – 7.

God is the potter; we are the clay.

**Psalm Response:** Psalm 80:2 – 3,15 – 16,18 – 19(4),

Lord make us turn to you, let us see your face and we shall be saved.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading:** 1 Corinthians 1:3 – 9.

We are given every spiritual grace, gift, we need to witness to the Christ.

**Gospel:** Mark 13:33 – 37.

Watch be Alert!

God is good, **all the time**, All the Time, **God is good**.

I stand before you today (tonight) my friends simply and fully filled with gratitude for the love and care you have shown me and my family during this particularly hard month we have gone through. This is Advent already and we are awaiting the light of the world to become present in our darkness. I love Advent and all it means. St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians was written directly to me. Paul is reminding us that we have been given every, hear that, every spiritual gift we need to carry out our mission. Come Lord Jesus Come. My most recent experience of this was while I enter surgery for my injury and all I can tell you, and I know some of you will say it was the drugs, and certainly they played a role in it by letting me let down the barriers to being awake to what is happening. I felt totally encompassed by warm caring hands it really was overwhelming and then there was the voice of a nurse (or Jesus) saying "it's ok joe we got you!" I heard that 3 times during the surgery but the warmth did not go away for days. Your prayers and the work of the potter brought me here today to announce to you with joyful hope that Jesus is coming, Come Lord Jesus Come.

As has been said before, today is the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent. So we begin a whole new liturgical year featuring Cycle B of the three-year Lectionary. We will be hearing primarily from the Gospel of Mark, the shortest of the Gospels with no infancy narrative, so it will be augmented with readings from John's Gospel. In today's passage from Mark we are given a very dramatic parable about the value of watchfulness in our spiritual lives as well as our earthly lives. There is also a threefold command to be watchful, to stay alert for the Lord will come when God

is least expected. This whole watchfulness command will carry us through all of Advent. Come Lord Jesus Come.

I am reminded of the story that the great spiritual writer, Henri Nouwen tells of his time with a travelling Circus troop (today also shut down by CoVid). Henri was very much enthralled by the trapeze artist, his name Joe. So one day after a show he approached Joe and said, "What does it feel like to be the biggest star of the show?" Joe looked at him with a puzzled look on his face and replied, "Star, I am not the star! The real star is my catcher, the person who watches my every move and gauges their trapeze to be just in the perfect spot at the right moment to We catch me. It's a wonderful relationship, a real team effort." We all know there is no "I" in "team." From this story as well as the one in Mark's Gospel today we can easily see the value of watchfulness, of staying alert. Come Lord Jesus Come.

This is not a passive waiting that God is calling us to aw we await the "Light of the World." And as Paul reminded the Corinthians and us, we have what we need, so I am challenging you, and myself, to look into the eyes of your neighbor, especially during the kiss of peace and as we go forth into our lives this week, and to see the face of God. I believe that as we do that, and the more we do that, like Moses our ancestor, we will reflect the light of God's countenance. Come Lord Jesus Come.

God is good, **all the time**, All the time, **God is good**.

And once again thank you for all your prayers and support.