



Advent: Hope



Word of the Week Matthew 24:37-44

Jesus said to his disciples: 'As it was in Noah's day, so will it be when the Son of Man comes. For in those days before the Flood people were eating, drinking, taking wives, taking husbands, right up to the day Noah went into the ark, and they suspected nothing till the Flood came and swept all away. It will be like this when the Son of Man comes. Then of two men in the fields one is taken, one left; of two women at the millstone grinding, one is taken, one left.

'So stay awake, because you do not know the day when your master is coming. You may be quite sure of this, that if the householder had known at what time of the night the burglar would come, he would have stayed awake and would not have allowed anyone to break through the wall of his house. Therefore, you too must stand ready because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.'

For lots of people, the four weeks of Advent are just a countdown of shopping days to Christmas.

For Christians, Advent is a special holy time heading up to the birth of their saviour Jesus Christ. The word Advent means 'coming'. When someone special is coming to visit it is usual to prepare and get ready. The Gospel reading this week reminds us to be ready. It serves as a reminder to remain vigilant as we never know when the time may come.

During Advent Christians prepare themselves for the coming of the infant Jesus. The Church sees Advent as the beginning of the religious year. It is a time to look back over the past year and to ask for God's forgiveness for all the times we have said or done something wrong. Let us prepare our hearts and minds to welcome the infant Jesus.

Challenges for the week ahead:

Live with awareness: Don't get lost in routine or distractions; cultivate spiritual attentiveness. Take a break from social media.

Practice readiness: Readiness means living with integrity, compassion and faith.

Encourage others: Share hope for the future. Help others when they need it.

Mary's Song

And Mary said:
"My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me — holy is his name. His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation. He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors."



Prayers for the week

Dear Lord,

Help us to begin our Advent journey of faith and preparation. Prepare our hearts to receive you by ignoring all the distractions going on around us. Make our preparation for Christmas one that centres only on you.

Amen

Lord of Light,

As Advent begins, we lift our hearts in hope. You are the promise that breaks through the darkness, the dawn that scatters fear and despair. Strengthen us to wait with patience, to trust in Your timing, and to welcome Your presence with joy.

Amen.

Merciful Father,

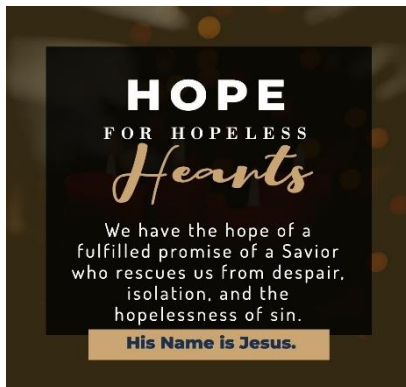
As we journey through this first week of Advent, prepare our hearts to receive Your Son. Clear away the clutter of selfishness and pride, and plant within us seeds of compassion and peace. Teach us to walk in Your ways, so that when Christ comes, He may find us ready and rejoicing.

Amen.



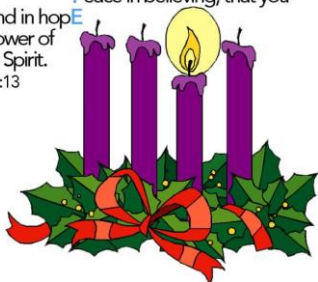
This is Advent, season of promise. In our worship we prepare for the birth of a baby in a dusty stable in Bethlehem, and remind ourselves that this child will become the Saviour of the World who will return again in power and glory to draw all of his children together with songs of everlasting praise. The promise of the baby is also the promise of eternal life to all who believe.

God of hope and promise, be with us throughout this Advent season and draw us ever closer as we journey together toward the stable and the birth of your Son, our Saviour. Amen



I AM THE
LORD'S SERVANT
*May it be to me
as you have said*
from LUKE 1:38

May the God of Hope
fill you with all joy and
Peace in believing, that you
may abound in hope
by the power of
the Holy Spirit.
Rom 15:13



Reflection

Advent is a time for joy and hope. But we can only really experience joy and hope if we are happy within ourselves.

Advent is a good time for letting go of our worries and troubles and anything that is bothering us.

If we have fallen out with someone, Advent is a good time for making up and offering friendship.

May this Advent be a happy and peaceful time for all of us, free of any worries and troubles.

May this Advent be a time of reconciliation.

