

Parish Newsletter

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT | 3 DECEMBER 2017
YEAR B | ISSUE 1

Advent comes with an annual wake-up call. It's not that we have all been sleeping for the last while. It is a recognition that our priorities can get lost in the midst of all demands of family life, work commitments, and the general worries of life. So this annual wake-up call is a helpful reminder to us to check our sense of direction and put first things first.

Perhaps at times we can be like the Israelites described by Isaiah in the first reading, repeatedly wandering from their good intentions. Isaiah asks for God's help in this situation, reminding God: "Lord, you are our Father, we the clay, you the potter, we are all the work of your hand."

It's as though Isaiah is saying to God, "Lord, if we do wander from our

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good intentions, it is you who made us. Come now and help us."

Both Isaiah and Paul in the second reading have no doubt about God's willingness to help, because they believe in a loving God, and so do we. When in the midst of our

THIS WEEK (4-10 DECEMBER)

- 4 **Mon** St John of Damascus, doctor
- 5 **Tue** St Crispina, martyr
- 6 **Wed** St Nicholas, bishop
- 7 **Thur** St Ambrose, bishop and doctor
- 8 **Fri** THE IMM. CONCEPTION OF THE BVM
- 9 **Sat** St Juan Diego; St Peter Fourier
- 10 **Sun** SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

SEIZE THE MOMENT

confusion we send out a plea to God, "Lord, help me to sort out myself out!" this is a cry for help to the loving God who made us. No matter what our current problem, God loves us, God is calling us, and God is faithful.

It is this fidelity of God that makes us people of gratitude and hope. We have been given the gift of life and left in charge of that gift. It is a great honour when we are entrusted with the care of something valuable. What is it like for you to see yourself entrusted by God with the gift of life? Each morning when we awake we can offer a prayer of thanks for the gift of another day. We can also look forward in hope so that we can make the most of that day. We ask the Lord to keep us awake so that we will not miss opportunities that will come our way, both for our own fulfilment and for the benefit of others.

"Stay awake, for you never know when the time will come." These words are often seen as referring exclusively to the moment of death. That's a very limited and a somewhat scary way of hearing them. Any moment of grace, any positive opportunity, can be seen as the Lord coming into our lives. We are the losers when we miss out on such opportunities. So, this Advent, stay awake to welcome the Lord in whatever way he comes to you. ■

— John Byrne

Reflection

Can you recall the experience of an unexpected grace – a good thing happening for you that was not anticipated?

Lesson

"Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, you the potter, we are all the work of your hands" (Is 64:8).

Prayer

Let us see, O Lord, your mercy, and give us your saving help.

NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS



Isaiah 40:1-5.9-11
Psalm 84:9-14
2 Peter 3:8-14
Mark 1:1-8