

Father Ed's Homily for December 1

Last weekend, I tried to explain in my reflection on the season of Advent that Advent season is a four-week liturgical season of preparation that brings us into Christmas season. We are living in between Jesus Christ's first coming, namely in humility and weakness at Bethlehem, and his second coming in majesty and power at the end of time as the Church teaches us. With this first week of Advent celebration, we have started our new liturgical year readings. As you are aware, we have just ended the Liturgical readings of Year B. So today, we begin with Liturgical readings from Year C. It starts on December 1, 2024, and ends on November 29, 2025.

All the readings explain what the Advent season has called us to do, namely, to celebrate Jesus' first coming (Christmas), and to be Vigilant and Prayerful for his Second coming at the end of the world. In the first reading, the prophet Jeremiah brings a message of hope and comfort to his people in Babylonian exile. King David's dynasty came to an end with the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. The prophet Jeremiah describes the fall of Jerusalem as a stump which God will let it grow again. It will be a new and just shoot, a new King for David's throne. He will do what is right and just in the land. The early Christians saw this promise fulfilled in the person of Jesus.

We read this message of hope and comfort in the Gospel and the second readings also. St. Luke describes what the end time will look like in today's Gospel reading. He uses an apocalyptic language that is scary but at the end brings a message of hope and comfort to his people. All that he asks them to do for Christ's second coming is to be Vigilant, Patient, and Prayerful.

The Christian community in Thessalonica thought Jesus' second coming would take place in their lifetime. Since he was not coming as they had expected many of them lost patience and started to live a life does not worthy of a Christian. St. Paul then wrote this letter we just heard to strengthen their faith and be patient and live a life holy for Christ's second coming.

Advent season is a time of repentance, a change of attitude which requires us to be prayerful, patient, and vigilant for Christ second coming that no one knows except God.

During these four weeks of preparation for Christmas, as we do our Christmas shopping, let us also take some time for our spiritual needs. Spiritual preparations may include, for instance, if you only attend a weekend Mass, perhaps you could attend one or two Masses during the week. What about praying the Rosary, going to confession, having daily meditation, private retreat/recollection etc.? Please, let the parish office know if you need assistance for meaningful and fruitful Advent season so that you will experience a grace-filled Christmas.

Have a happy and blessed season of Advent.

