

Keep awake! Watch! Pray!

YEAR B – ADVENT 1 – 3 DECEMBER 2017– SPRINGLINE PARISH

[READINGS: ISAIAH 64.1-9; PSALM 80.1-7, 16-18; 1 CORINTHIANS 1. 3-9; MARK 13. 24-37]

The snow flakes on Friday were lovely weren't they? I hope you all had a fairly good week; I also hope that during the week you did experience the presence of God in one way or another. Would anyone wish to share an experience?

In the Word of God this morning, the key message that comes out from the readings especially from the first reading from Prophet Isaiah as well as from the gospel (Mark 13.24-37) is: **Keep awake! Watch!** And I would add **"Pray!"**

"Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come."(verse 33)

again in verse 35: "Therefore, **keep awake** – for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn,

(36) "or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly.

(37) "And what I say to you I say to all: **Keep awake.**"

I think this could indeed be the theme for this Season of Advent: **Keep awake! Watch! Pray!**

The word "Advent" comes from the Latin "venire" which means "to come." That person who comes and for whom we keep awake is none other than Jesus Christ. **He already came on earth 2000 years ago. He will come again at the end of time.**

During the Advent Season and at Christmas, **we celebrate this two-fold coming of Christ.** In the Holy Communion we proclaim: *Christ has died! Christ is Risen! Christ will come again!*

Watching and waiting is so much part of our daily lives. We wait for all sorts of things. We wait for a new child to be born. We wait for the bus or train or a flight. We wait for the postman every day. We wait for the arrival of a dear one. The psalmist says in psal 27. Verse 13:

"Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; yea, wait for the Lord!"

There are different ways of keeping awake and alert for the Redeemer. One way for us to wait, watch and keep awake is the **Way of Prayer. Prayer is keeping awake, keeping watch with God.** Prayer is spending time with God. It is relaxing spiritually with God, just being with the Lord, talking to the Lord and also listening to the Lord in our hearts, opening our hearts to him, abiding in the Lord, having a spiritual walk with the Lord.

Advent Book with readings and prayers.

Advent is a special, spiritual season for us. We have already begun singing carols. (cf. Fillingham yesterday). Advent Sunday is also the Church's New Year Day. So, **Happy Advent to you all!**

Let me conclude with the key message from the word of God today and let this be the theme for this Season of Advent: **Keep awake! Watch! Pray!**

Let me just read a verse from the Bible to encourage us to pray in this way.

"In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.

(Is 3015) **"Therefore the Lord waits to be gracious to you; (18a)**

"Blessed are all those who wait for him." (18c)

(ST Mattapally)