

ADVENT:

A new start in our spiritual journey

Jeremiah 33.14-16, Thessalonians 3. 12-4.2, Luke 21.25-28, 34-36

SPRINGLINE PARISH ADVENT 1 2018

1. Introduction

- Gifts at Christmas: what to give? Where to buy? How to budget? Whom to give? M/S? Lidl? Amazon?
- Christmas lunch: what? Whom to invite? Stuff needed/shopping
- Cards/wishes – whom to send cards through proper cards/email?
- Christmas ads/films (little to do with Christmas!)
- We're in a panic, in a rush, helter-skelter

2. Why?

- How many of us think of what it all means? The real meaning of it all?
- Majority of people come out of Christmas period exhausted, tired and not always happy and content.
- I've even heard that families have veritable nervous and financial breakdowns at Christmas time!
- Why? I think we lose the plot in the maze of American and Western consumerism/commercialism, markets and secularity.

3. Advent and what it means for our lives

First: That is why we have a Season of Advent – *4 weeks of spiritual preparation.* Advent invites us to think some new thoughts, imagine new projects, and focus our basic options at the start of the Church's year of worship. We renew our welcome to Jesus as the anchor of our lives, and prepare for his return at the end of time. Advent is an open invitation to make a new start in our personal spiritual journey. This is the invitation of Advent!

Second: our starting again in Advent must be marked by

- Our conversion of life
- Our renewal of life
- A new dawn in our life and must be marked also by a seeking of:
- Stillness of being
- Silence
- Listening to the will of God in our conscience and
- Patient waiting

Third: Advent also begins the Year of Luke for readings in all the Sundays of the New Liturgical Year.

4. The Word of God Today speaks to us:

The primary message is the Second Coming of The King in Creation. Luke 21.25-36.

- 4.1. Luke links the event with other great events in the Bible's unfolding drama: 'the heavens', 'the nations'(v 25-26)
- 4.2. This will be a public and visible event (v 27):
 - The first coming was incognito: the young Prince of Glory landing in disguise behind enemy lines.
 - This time in "robed in dreadful majesty" (Wesley)
- 4.3. Like the Thessalonian passage: this is an impetus to a strong and forward-looking faith (v.36) "*And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.*"
 - The 2nd Reading: the coming of the Lord Jesus (Thess 3.9-13) – Paul gives instructions about living in holiness while waiting for the coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - Live each day as if it were to be the day of the Lord's return.

If Jesus were to return today, what would he find me doing?
What would he think of my choices/priorities?
Advent gives us a chance to renew our Christian walk of faith. God's love is unconditional and gracious, a message at the heart of Advent and Christmas!
 - "*Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.*"
"Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

5. Prayer