

First Sunday in Advent 2021

Embrace the Light

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First Reading: Jeremiah 33:14-16

Psalm: 25:4-5, 8-9, 10, 14

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 3:12 – 4:2

Gospel: Luke 21:25-28, 34-36



Early one dark morning in January, I awoke at 6 AM and thought of one of our Sisters who was dying. I dressed quickly and drove to the hospital. As I entered the ICU, I could see that Sister would soon meet God face-to-face. I held her hand and prayed that her journey to heaven would be peaceful. Just as the sun was rising, Sister's breathing became shallow and her facial features softened. At that moment, the bright orange sun filled the room with light amidst the glow of a new day. The tiny, frail figure before me slowly exhaled her last breath and went home to her God. For me, this experience was a sign of God's overpowering presence.

Advent is the liturgical season that reminds us that our darkness can be turned into joy. We are invited to abandon the noise of our chaotic world as we remember that in stillness we can hear God's voice advising us to be silent, aware, and vigilant.

Advent is a time of prayer, a period to grow in holiness by using our energy to love more deeply as we joyfully serve one another. It is a precious grace-filled interval.

Just as Sister Mary of Lourdes lived through the darkness of night and so many of life's challenges, when dawn came she relinquished the darkness and embraced the light.

This Advent let us strive to do the same. This is our Advent challenge.

Ponder and Pray

1. Identify the darkness within yourself and plan how to overcome it.
2. Select a passage from the Advent scriptures and meditate on the passage. Write your insights in a journal entry.
3. Spend time each day encouraging others to 'embrace the light.'