

Sunday, November 28, 2021

1st Sunday of Advent (Year C)

SUNDAY'S READINGS: Jeremiah 33:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 3:12-4:2; Luke 21:25-28, 34-36

SUNDAY'S GOSPEL:

Jesus said to his disciples: "There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on earth nations will be in dismay, perplexed by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will die of fright in anticipation of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. But when these signs begin to happen, stand erect and raise your heads because your redemption is at hand.

"Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy from carousing and drunkenness and the anxieties of daily life, and that day catch you by surprise like a trap. For that day will assault everyone who lives on the face of the earth. Be vigilant at all times and pray that you have the strength to escape the tribulations that are imminent and to stand before the Son of Man."

QUESTIONS FOR FAMILY DISCUSSION IN PREPARATION FOR SUNDAY

1. Often sin becomes a heart issue (staying motivated to do the right thing) as opposed to a head issue (knowing the right thing to do); that's why Jesus warns about letting our hearts become drowsy. Describe a time when you lost the motivation to do what you were supposed to do. What do you think caused you to lose your motivation – it became hard, you just got bored, you lost focus for a while, or some other reason? In hindsight, what do you think you could have done to avoid that loss of motivation?
2. Describe a time when you chose to ignore something you knew you were supposed to do because you didn't want to be inconvenienced or it wasn't pleasurable to you. Jesus warned of the danger of pleasure-seeking. What are some pleasures that you seek that make it difficult for you to follow God's will for you (examples: hitting the snooze repeatedly, watching too much television, having to have your hot coffee or particular dessert, craving the attention of others, etc.) Describe a time someone motivated/exhorted you to action even when you'd rather do something more pleasurable. What did they say or do that led you to overcome that initial laziness?
3. Describe a time you were anxious. How alert were you to what was going on around you, or did being anxious make you oblivious to things? Describe a time that you were so concerned with small things that you missed the big things? How can we help alleviate the every-day anxieties of other family members; how does doing that help them to stay focused on God's will for them?
4. In the Gospel, Jesus stressed the importance of staying vigilant in the face of difficulties and staying rooted in prayer. How have you been impacted by the prayers of others? What does it mean to you to know that other family members are praying for you? When you are particularly facing some difficulty, who are the people you can count on to support you? What do they say/do that leads you to call upon them? How has praying for other family members also impacted you and your relationship with the people that you are praying for?