



CONSOLATA SHRINE

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT



29th November 2020

FIRST READING

Isaiah 63:16d-17. 19b; 64:1.3b-8

“O that you would rend the heavens and come down.”

A reading from the Book of Isaiah

You, O Lord, are our Father, our Redeemer from old is your name. O Lord, why do you make us err from your ways and harden our heart, so that we do not fear you? Return for the sake of your servants, the tribes of your heritage. O that you would tear the heavens and come down, that the mountains might quake at your presence! You came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear, no eye has seen a God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. You meet him that joyfully works righteousness, those that remember you in your ways. Behold, you were angry, and we sinned; in our sins we have been a long time, and shall we be saved? We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no one that calls upon your name, that bestirs himself to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquities. Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 80:2-3.15-16.18-19 (R. 4)

R. O God, bring us back; let your face shine on us, and we shall be saved.

O shepherd of Israel, hear us,
enthroned on the cherubim, shine forth.
Rouse up your might and come to save us. **R**

God of hosts, turn again, we implore;
look down from heaven and see. Visit this vine and
protect it, the vine your right hand has planted. **R**

May your hand be on the man at your right hand,
the son of man you have confirmed as your own.
And we shall never forsake you again;
give us life that we may call upon your name. **R**



SECOND READING

1Corinthians 1:3-9

We wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

Brethren: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to God always for you because of the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, that in every way you were enriched in him with all speech and all knowledge – even as the testimony to Christ was confirmed among you – so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ; who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.



ALLELUIA

*Let us see, O Lord, your mercy,
and grant us your salvation.!*

ALLELUIA



GOSPEL

Mark 13:33-37

“Watch therefore – for you do not know when the master of the house will come.”

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Mark

At that time; Jesus said to his disciples: “Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Watch therefore – for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning – lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Watch.”

Reflection: Watch for Him by Scott Hahn, Ph.D.

The new Church year begins with a plea for God’s visitation. “Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down,” the prophet Isaiah cries in today’s First Reading. In today’s Psalm, too, we hear the anguished voice of Israel, imploring God to look down from His heavenly throne - to save and shepherd His people. Today’s readings are relatively brief. Their language and “message” are deceptively simple. But we should take note of the serious mood and penitential aspect of the Liturgy today - as the people of Israel recognize their sinfulness, their failures to keep God’s

covenant, their inability to save themselves. And in this Advent season, we should see our own lives in the experience of Israel. As we examine our consciences, can't we, too, find that we often harden our hearts, refuse His rule, wander from His ways, withhold our love from Him? God is faithful, Paul reminds us in today's Epistle. He is our Father. He has hearkened to the cry of His children, coming down from heaven for Israel's sake and for ours - to redeem us from our exile from God, to restore us to His love. In Jesus, we have seen the Father (see John 14:8-9). The Father has let His face shine upon us. He is the good shepherd (see John 10:11-15) come to guide us to the heavenly kingdom. No matter how far we have strayed, He will give us new life if we turn to Him, if we call upon His holy name, if we pledge anew never again to withdraw from Him. As Paul says today, He has given us every spiritual gift - especially the Eucharist and penance - to strengthen us as we await Christ's final coming. He will keep us firm to the end - if we let Him. So, in this season of repentance, we should heed the warning - repeated three times by our Lord in today's Gospel - to be watchful, for we know not the hour when the Lord of the house will return.

ADVENT WREATH

First Week of Advent



The origins of the Advent wreath are found in the folk practices of the pre-Christian Germanic peoples who, during the cold December darkness of Eastern Europe, gathered wreaths of evergreen and lighted fires as signs of hope in a coming spring and renewed light.

Christians kept these popular traditions alive, and by the 16th century Catholics and Protestants throughout Germany used these symbols to celebrate their Advent hope in Christ, the everlasting Light. From Germany the use of the Advent wreath spread to other parts of the Christian world.

The Advent wreath is a circular garland of evergreen branches representing eternity. On that wreath, five candles are typically arranged. Three candles are violet and the fourth is rose, but four white candles or four violet candles can also be used. In the center of the wreath sits a white candle. (Note that some Advent wreath have only the first four candles -3 violet and one pink). Each day at home, the candles are lighted, perhaps before the evening meal-- one candle the first week, and then another each succeeding week until December 25th. A short prayer may accompany the lighting. As a whole, these candles represent the coming of the light of

Christ into the world. Each candle represents an aspect of the spiritual preparation for the coming of the Lord, Jesus Christ.

On the first Sunday of Advent, the first purple candle is lit. This candle is typically called the "**PROPHECY CANDLE**" in remembrance of the prophets, primarily Isaiah, who foretold the birth of Christ. This candle represents **HOPE** or expectation in anticipation of the coming Messiah.

Blessing for the Advent Wreath

O God, by whose word all things are sanctified, we look on these earthly signs -light and green branches- and remember God's promise to our world: Christ, our Light and our Hope, will come.

Pour forth thy blessing upon this wreath and grant that we who use it may prepare our hearts for the Coming of Christ, and may receive from thee abundant graces. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Listen to the words of Isaiah the prophet:

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; on those who lived in a land as dark as death a light has dawned. You have increased their joy and given them gladness; They rejoice in your presence as those who rejoice at harvest, as warriors exult when dividing spoil. (*Is. 9:1-2*)

Then all pray:

O God, rejoicing, we remember the promise of your Son.

As the light from this candle, may the blessing of Christ come upon us, brightening our way and guiding us by his truth.

May Christ our Savior bring life into the darkness of our world, and to us, as we wait for his coming. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

Then the first candle is lighted.

Daily Prayer for Lighting the Advent Wreath, during this first week

O Emmanuel, Jesus Christ, desire of every nation, Savior of all peoples, come and dwell among us.

Announcements

1. Next Sunday 6th December, there will be the blessing of our Tithe, our families and our work at the end of all Masses. Please come prepared.
2. You remember that we had announced the engraving of names will be done towards last mile contributions of Allamano Centre. We invite you to visit Allamano Centre and see the engraved names. We invite more people to register for engraving and listing the names in honour or in memory because last mile contributions are ongoing.
 - Listing of names is on progress when ready we will inform you.
3. **Announcement:** Rooms are ready for booking in Allamano Centre, individuals, families, groups or any one in need of accommodation are welcome. Halls are also available for hiring (for Wedding receptions, meetings etc.) and few offices are available to let. For more information, please contact Allamano Centre Manager - 0796305301 or visit our notice board outside the church.
4. Formation classes for the new CMA group begin on the 13th of December at 9.30am in the Auditorium. All men who registered and those who didn't are invited to join this class and start their formation.
5. **Special announcement:** In accordance with Nairobi Archdiocesan Pastoral Council directives, we will not be doing live transmission of Masses from next Sunday. All Christians are kindly asked to attend physical Masses.
 - We are all reminded to put on mask properly, wash hands before entering the Church, keep social distance in and outside the Church. The Communion is strictly by hand.

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