



ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

THIS SUNDAY December 2 & BEYOND”

“Advent: Earthly doings with Heavenly Import”



Advent season is now upon us. If you are not sure what the word Advent means, my apologies. It is used sometimes in many Churches as shorthand as a way to refer to the weeks before Christmas. The word Advent has been used for a very long time. You know already I'm going to say Latin, right? Yep. *Adventus*, “arrival”, or in the verb form, “to come”. So, you start with the celebration of Jesus' birth. Then you add in the preparation for the celebration, which takes a little time of course; we want to make sure we are reminded when the angel visited Mary and told her she was going to have a baby, and she agreed to it. Then you add in the OTHER “arrival” of Jesus, that is, when He comes the SECOND time at the end of what we would call time as we know it. And now you've just added in Apocalypse, and “Revelations”, and “Judgement Day”. And now we need a little more time to prepare and talk about all that. Oh, and there's ANOTHER arrival: not just when Jesus was born, but when He shows up on the scene at about age 30 prepared to engage his public ministry as the Messiah. So we need to add in the prophecy and teaching of John the Baptist, who was Jesus' forerunner.

It's kind of amazing the season of Advent only covers 4 Sundays!

It's something like saying, “the advent of the computer.” If you were to celebrate that every year, you'd have to have a season created to talk about all the history of it, before the actual day of celebration! And, of course, take the time to download the Computer Feastday app.

Here's a question for you to think about....are there more computers (and we have to add in smart phones now into that definition) on the face of the earth than there are Christians currently?

The factual answer is that, although there are more gadgets in use than the world population (7.2 billion people), the latest I saw was 2 billion PC's in use, plus an estimated 2.71 billion smartphones. I'm leaving out the tablets. So that makes 4.71 billion "computers" in use today on the face of the earth. Christians make up about 2.3 billion of the earth's population (the largest at 33%), although it could be much bigger number if it weren't for the average 160,000 Christians deliberately martyred for their faith each year.

There is another answer to that question besides the factual one, of course. When people are looking for answers to their lives, where or in what are they putting their hope? Does knowledge plus speed plus cyber collective equal eternal satisfaction? Of course not. But it does obviously seem to be a panacea for earthly satisfactions. This is an illustration (and I'm not denying any benefits) of how humanity has always put their hopes and desires into things of earth rather than eternal things.

That seems like a facetious thing to say these days. But that's because it is so difficult today to conceive of a world without computers, and yet we went from Zero to more than Seven Billion in only 4 decades. It is not a facetious reflection. It is not frivolous; it is not simply amusing. It is a serious question that has to be asked always, about our time, our priorities, our ability to look beyond ourselves, to hear truth in its purity.

You know why we don't have an annual celebration for computers? Because they keep becoming obsolete! We can't celebrate anything but the creation of the thing; and then we complain or laugh at how primitive it all was in the beginning.

My friends, there is nothing primitive about the Love of God prepared for us to live in. And that's why we can keep coming back to a season of preparation for the coming of Christ. It is not only about what took place, and what He can be in our lives now, and about what has yet to come, it also about proclaiming this advent news from the housetops! We want the whole world to know who He is and that He is here for All, and won't you please join us so you can be with us when He does come again!

And He never becomes obsolete; you will never have to trade in or exchange the Old Jesus for a New Jesus! Just be prepared now for when He comes again. That is not

a new market device advertisement to tease you. The Prophets for centuries did not tease; they spoke forth. And then He came as a baby born, and then He proclaimed and acted in power for three years; and then He rose from the dead, and now we look forward to His coming again. Jesus said, “ *Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.* ”

You know what that tells me? It tells me that I matter to God. It tells me that He sees me, and knows me. It tells me I'm not a commodity; He desires me in His presence because He made me. It tells me He has always been, and always will be. It tells me I should take time to consider the ramifications, and take the time to prepare myself. And it tells me that as long as I am searching for Him, He will never be out of range. Advent and the season of arrivals, and my preparation within it, puts me in good position to see what's REALLY important in this life.

Fr. Robert G. Eaton, Interim Rector

Readings for this Sunday – The First Sunday of Advent

Zechariah 14:4-9 Psalm 50:1-6 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13 Luke 21:25-31

CALENDAR

SUNDAY: The First Sunday of Advent

8:00a Low Mass (Church)

10:30a Solemn High Mass (Church)

—*The entrance to the church is on 6th Avenue*—

Note: Coffee Hour & Fellowship follow the Mass in the Parish Hall.

MONDAY: 7:00p (AA) Doctors' Group (Fireside Room)

TUESDAY: Noon Mass (St. Mary's Chapel)

FRIDAY: AA Meetings

8:00p Ladies' Group (Fireside Room)

8:15p Men's Group (Parish Hall)