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**Disciples
Making Disciples**

Be Ready to Meet Jesus

1st Sunday of Advent
27 Nov 2022

Is 2:1-5
Rom 13:11-14
Mt 24:37-44

There is always much anticipation when the liturgical year begins. The deeper meaning of Advent is the expectation of the ultimate – a meeting with Christ our King, when the world, or our life, passes away.

This phenomenal reunion with the Lord is a certainty, but are we prepared? We will have to spend the rest of our lives dying to ourselves trying, as Isaiah, St Paul and Jesus tell us, starting right now.

Isaiah preaches that Christ has the final word on the last day of our existence: “He will wield authority over the nations and adjudicate between many peoples” (Is 2:4).

St Paul warns urgently, “You know ‘the time’ has come: you must wake up now... The night is almost over” (Rom 13:11-12).

It is not for us to know when the Lord will come. Our one task is to remain vigilant. Like the householder – had he known when the thief would plunder, he would not have been robbed (Mt 24:43).

Jesus tells us, “It will be like this when the Son of Man comes. Then of two men in the fields one is taken, one left, of two women at the millstone grinding, one is taken, one left” (Mt 24: 39-41). Christ minces no words. His message: Spiritual complacency will leave us bereft, left behind like so much flotsam after high tide, as were the people in Noah’s time.

We will be deprived of the greatest love in the world, all because we did

not have the foresight to prepare, like the foolish virgins, who didn’t bring enough oil for their lamps, left to buy more and missed the bridegroom’s arrival (Mt 25:1-13). The parable ends with the Lord’s stern counsel: “So stay awake, because you do not know either the day or the hour” (Mt 25:13).

We can’t expect the unexpected if we sleepwalk through our lives being ignorant of Scripture, lukewarm in faith, indifferent to loving and serving God and neighbour. Spiritual sloth certainly cost Jesus’ apostles on Mount Tabor at his Transfiguration (Mt 17:1-12) and in the Garden of Gethsemane during his Agony (Mk 14: 32-42).

Faith lived lackadaisically means missing the presence of God in the everyday and wasting opportunities to be in communion with him, when the occasions to live for and evangelise others are lost.

To stay awake and prepare are to acknowledge that God is the driver and to surrender to his Omnipotence. Our false sense of control lulls us into a complacency of Godlessness and inaction. We become lazy Christians fattened by pleasure, glory and power, too full of ourselves for suffering and sacrifice.

Spiritual preparedness is a rigorous exercise that must happen intentionally every day, while grinding the “millstone” at home, working the “field” at the office, and everywhere in between – perseveringly, especially when the rest of the world is falling by the wayside.

“The expectation of Jesus’ *Parousia* does not dispense us from working in this world but, on the contrary, creates responsibility to the divine Judge for our actions in this world. For this very reason our responsibility for working in and for this world increases,” said Pope Benedict XVI (General Audience,

12 Nov 2008).

St Paul’s teaching is clear: “Let us live decently as people do in the day time: no drunken orgies, no promiscuity or licentiousness, and no wrangling or jealousy. Let your armour be the Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom 13:13-14).

“Watch for your life’s sake. Let not your lamps be quenched, nor your loins unloosed; but be ready” (*Didache*, Chapter 16). Christ’s Coming is always imminent. But while we await the final joy of his absolute arrival, let us remember to embrace Heaven at each Eucharistic celebration, when we “go up to the Mountain of the Lord, to the Temple of the God of Jacob” (Is 2:2), and the Lord feeds us at Holy Communion. With ploughshares and sickles instead of swords and spears (Is 2:3), let us stand ready “to praise the Lord’s name” (Ps 122:4) and exchange God’s enduring gifts of love and peace (Ps 122:6-8).

The wisdom to an everlastingly fruitful encounter is to welcome him into our hearts without delay. We prepare for exams and interviews. We purchase insurance for the unforeseen. Let us have the astuteness to invest in the ultimate – our glorious eternal life.



“You must wake up now.”
(Rom 13:11)

Announcements

For announcements in the bulletin, send your requests to mmm@sfxchurch.sg by the MONDAY before the weekend, 2359hrs

SCAN QR CODE
FOR MASS HYMNS
www.sfxchurch.sg/mass



FAULTY/DAMAGED
CHURCH PEWS?

Spot any faulty or damaged pews in church? Scan the QR Code to share with us at tinyurl.com/SFXFacilitiesReport



SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

It is available via appointment only. You may contact the Parish Office to make an appointment for the following time slots:

Fridays: 4pm - 6pm
Saturdays: 10am - 12pm

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Come storm heaven with us in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament.



Date: Mon 28 Nov 2022
Time: 8pm - 9.30pm
Venue: Mount Tabor Adoration Room

PARISH T-SHIRT SALE

The parish t-shirt is on sale for \$10! Featuring a slim-fit design, it is cool and comfortable and made from high quality cotton that won't shrink or fade. Hurry down to the booth outside JPII Hall after Mass, while stocks last!

BAT: ADVENT TALK - PART II (ZOOM)

The Bible Apostolate Team (BAT) will be offering a 2-part series of talks on the Jewish Roots of Advent, based on the work of Dr Brant Pitre. The 2nd talk (based on the Mass readings for the 3rd and 4th Sundays of Advent) will be held via Zoom on **Fri 9 Dec from 8pm - 9.30pm**. Do join us via this Zoom link <https://bit.ly/BATadvent2022>.



CHRISTMAS CARD MAILING LIST

Have you changed your address? Are you new to the parish? Have you received an SFX Christmas Card before? Please remember to update your details by calling or emailing the Parish Office at secretariat@sfxchurch.sg.



CHRISTMAS PAGEANT RECRUITMENT

The Children's Liturgy Ministry will be organising this year's Christmas Pageant. We are looking for the young and the not-so-young to be involved. Scan the QR code to register. The pageant will be on **Christmas Eve at 5.30pm Mass** and on **Christmas Fiesta on 30 Dec, 7.30pm**. If you have any questions, please contact Lynnette at 9690 0750.



Practices will be from **7.30pm to 10pm** on

- **Wed 14 Dec**
- **Tue 20 Dec**
- **Fri 23 Dec** (Full Dress Rehearsal)



CHRISTMAS FIESTA: A GIFT GIVEN, A GIFT SHARED - SAVE THE DATE!

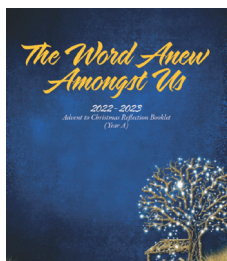
We're bringing back your favourite event of the year - CHRISTmas Fiesta! Themed "A Gift Given, A Gift Shared", join us for a night of fun, food and fellowship. There's something for everyone so mark your calendars and bring along your family and friends. All are welcome!

Date: Fri 30 Dec 2022
Time: 6.30pm - 10pm

ADVENT PRAYER TREE

What better idea than to give someone in need the gift of intentional prayer this Christmas? Just as we did last year, think of someone to pray for - either to return to Church or be open to knowing the Lord. The prayer tags will be available for you to write your prayers and drop them into the box located outside the JPII Hall.

OFFICE FOR THE NEW EVANGILISATION (ONE): ADVENT TO CHRISTMAS REFLECTION BOOKLET



Make this Advent season a time of deep reflection. Download the Advent to Christmas Reflection Booklet today, and gather with family and friends as we prepare to receive the wonderful "Gift" of our Father.

Scan the QR Code or download the booklet at <https://one.org.sg/resource/2022-2023-advent-to-christmas-reflection-booklet/>.



CHRISTMAS CONCERT BY SFX YOUTH CHOIR

Attention Choral Music Lovers: Our SFX Youth Choir will be staging our Christmas Concert in December. Booking of tickets is through the QR code. You can also purchase them at the Parish Office.

Date & Time: Sat 17 Dec, 8pm
Venue: SFX Auditorium
Cost: \$20
Register: tinyurl.com/SFXYouthChoirTickets2022



REGISTRATION FOR 2023 CATECHISM

Registration for children from **K1 to L1 in 2023** will be online via myCatholic.sg/Catechism. Parents must create an account for the child and login into the child's account to register for catechism. The child's baptism certificate must be uploaded at the time of registration. **Registration closes on 31 Dec 2022.**

For other levels, please email catechism@sfxchurch.sg for the registration process. For further enquiries, please contact 9749 1635 (Dan Lai).

What Is Advent?

The season of Advent begins four Sundays before Christmas and lasts for about four weeks. It marks the start of the new liturgical year. It helps prepare us for Christmas and we all know what and when Christmas is yes?

Christmas is shopping, planning, buying, baking, parties, dinners, cookies, Santa, gifts, caroling and stressing right? Well yes and no as there's a lot more to it than that. Advent is the expectant waiting, hopeful anticipation and cheerful preparation of God entering into our lives. Commemorating the birth of Jesus, preparing for Christ's return and welcoming God into our lives everyday, Advent prepares us for these events. The season also reminds us that there's joy in waiting. So Advent is not stressing about Christmas or rushing around to prepare for



6 WAYS TO GET READY FOR ADVENT



PREPARE YOUR HEART

Offer your heart as a dwelling place for the Holy Family to live in. Ask Jesus, Joseph and Mary to help you live out Advent as a time to prepare and wait for the coming of our Saviour's birth.



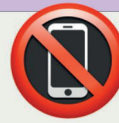
CREATE AN ADVENT CALENDAR

Countdown until Christmas Day by creating a calendar with special quotes & bible verses about hope, faith and love.



ASSIGN A SPECIFIC TIME FOR DAILY PRAYER

Whether you decide to wake up 15 minutes before your regular wake up time or assign some other time during the day to pray and reflect, try sticking to the time you've designated.



BE PRESENT

Limit the time spent on your cell phone, social media and computer. Increase the time you spend with family and friends by doing things you enjoy together.



SET UP A SPACE FOR PRAYER

You may include an Advent wreath and a Nativity set without baby Jesus in the manger.



DON'T FORGET THOSE IN NEED

Consider how we could serve our brothers and sisters in need. Volunteer at a center, or make and send cards to those in hospitals and nursing homes.

SOURCE: <https://catholic-link.org/guide-to-advent/>

CATHOLIC.sg

3 THINGS TO SAY "NO" TO DURING ADVENT

OVERCOMMITTING

Spend a Saturday afternoon in nature. Give yourself the time and space to connect meaningfully with your loved ones and to give thanks to Christ who came to save you.

PERFECTION

Instead of placing so much emphasis on coming up with gifts that look like a professional prepared them, saying no to perfectionism leads us to a simpler, more restful Advent.

EXCESSIVE SPENDING

Less time spent shopping the crowded malls and fussing over fancy gifts means more time spent quietly at home. Try giving presence over presents.

SOURCE: <https://aleteia.org/2017/12/11/3-things-you-should-say-no-to-for-advent/> CATHOLIC.sg

the festivities. Advent is also not Lent. Its about hope and more of a spring cleaning of our lives. Advent is about getting both our physical and spiritual homes ready to welcome our special guest - Jesus, the one who we have been waiting for.

Advent's colours aren't red and green. They are purple and pink. Like the candles on the Advent wreath, where a new candle is lit each week. The 3rd week is pink for Gaudete Sunday. Gaudete means "Rejoice" and "Don't lose heart" as the expected guest has almost arrived.

So if you are sick of Christmas by 25 Dec, you haven't prepared for Advent correctly. Advent is about expecting, waiting, hoping and praying.

So how will you spend this Advent period? Follow these 6 ways to get ready for Advent and these 3 things to say "No" to during Advent.

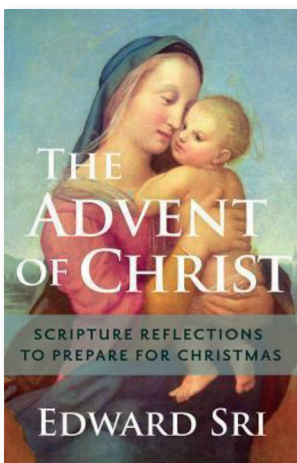


“When the Church celebrates the liturgy of Advent each year, she makes present this ancient expectancy of the Messiah, for by sharing in the long preparation for the Savior's first coming, the faithful renew their ardent desire for his second coming.” — CCC 524

Slow down and enjoy Advent with our Lord

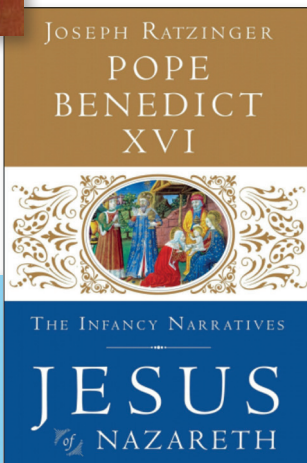
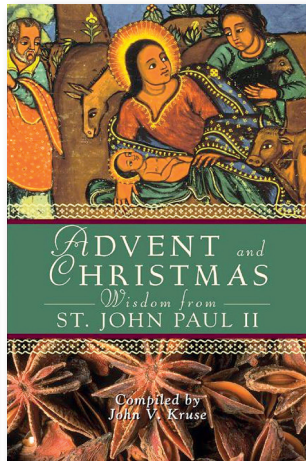
Many of us scan through pages of documents or social media posts at an average reading speed of 280 wpm (words/minute). As we begin Advent, let us slow down to enjoy time with Our Lord. The recommended reading speed for spiritual reading (and non-fictional works in general) is 150 wpm. This gives the mind time to dwell on the fuller meaning of what we are reading - an especially important process in spiritual reading as we want to be more open to the Holy Spirit speaking to us through the text.

Pick up any one of these books today from St Jerome Library to accompany your journey through this season of Advent. The library is open every Sunday 8am - 1pm.

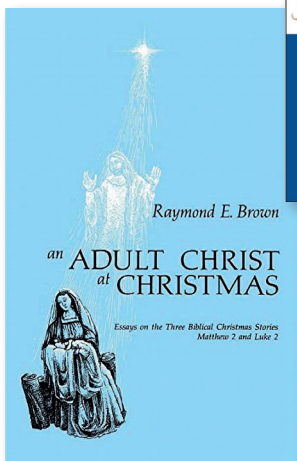


The Advent of Christ: Scripture Reflections to prepare for Christmas
by Dr. Edward Sri

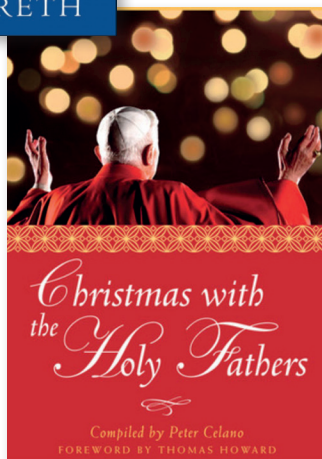
Advent and Christmas Wisdom from Pope John Paul II
compiled by John V. Kruse



Jesus of Nazareth: The Infancy Narratives
by Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI)



An Adult Christ at Christmas: Essays on the Three Biblical Christmas Stories Matthew 2 and Luke 2
by Fr. Raymond E. Brown



Christmas with the Holy Fathers
compiled by Peter Celano



Looking for more Information?
visit www.sfxchurch.sg!

MASS TIMES

WEEKDAY MASSES

Mon - Thu:
6.30pm

Tue - Sat:
6.30am

Fri:
8pm

WEEKEND MASSES

Sat: 5.30pm

Sun: 7am, 9am,
11am, 5.30pm
*(There is currently no
Confession before Mass)*

MASS ON PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

9am

CONFESSION

Contact Parish Office to
make an appointment.

Fri:
4pm - 6pm

Sat:
10am - 12pm

OPENING HOURS

MAIN GATE

Mon - Sun:
5am - 11pm

PARISH OFFICE

Mon - Sat:
9.30am - 6.30pm
Sun: 8.30am - 1pm
Closed on Public Holidays

ADORATION ROOM

Mon - Sun:
7am - 11pm
Closed on Public Holidays

LIBRARY

Sun:
8am - 1pm

COLUMBARIUM

Mon to Sat:
10am - 6pm
*Closed on Sundays and
Public Holidays.*

CANTEEN

Sun:
7am - 12pm

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

The sacrament can be administered to any Catholic awaiting serious surgery, suffering from serious illness or weakened by old age. Anointing may be given before admission for the anticipated medical procedure. Contact the Parish Office to request for a priest. In emergencies, priests of the church nearest to the hospital can be contacted.



INFANT BAPTISM

Spiritual preparation is held on the last Friday of every odd month. Baptism is held on the first/second Sunday of the following month. For registration, please refer to our website.



FUNERAL

Please check with the Parish Office for priest availability and Mass timing before confirming the timing at the crematorium. For prayers at the wake, please contact the Parish Office.



MARRIAGE

Contact the Parish Office 12 months before your intended date to book the church premises and ensure that your presiding priest is able to make that date.



MASS OFFERING

Mass offering envelopes are available outside the Parish Office. Submit your envelopes at least two weeks in advance of your intended date. Please write the names clearly, and in block letters.



VOLUNTEER & SHARE YOUR GIFTS!

If you're interested in content curation and design layout, contact mmm@sfxchurch.sg