

Christ the Light to the World

ADVENT 2022



Produced by the Office for Worship,
Adelaide Catholic Archdiocese



Introduction

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Advent marks the beginning of the Church's liturgical year, and like every anniversary, it provides us with an opportunity to 'take stock' and make plans for the coming year. The word 'Advent' means 'coming' or 'arrival' and has been used throughout the Church's history to refer to both the coming of Christ into the world as the infant born in Bethlehem 2000 years ago and his still-awaited coming in glory at the end of time.

The entire past and future of creation are caught up in these two events, so every Advent has a double focus of both past and future. We find this reflected in readings for the four Sundays. Every year the First Sunday of Advent reminds us to 'Stay awake' as we anticipate the end times. This theme is echoed on the Second Sunday as we continue to be called to repentance and good living. It is only on the Third and Fourth Sundays that we turn our minds to the event of Christ's birth and think of the immensity of what is contained in the words, 'The Word became flesh and dwelt amongst us.'

It is these very words that fill our hearts with hope. We yearn to be delivered from the evils that beset the world. We do not have to look far to see war and dissention, exploitation, oppression, injustice and division in countries both near and far. We yearn to experience the vision presented by Isaiah where swords are beaten into ploughshares; where the poor receive justice in the courts, and where the wolf and the lamb live happily side by side.

Such a vision might seem to us a cruel fairy tale, but with the birth of Christ came the hope that peace, justice and integrity can indeed flourish in a world in which the Prince of Peace reigns through love, gentleness, mercy and forgiveness.

A favourite scriptural image is that of light. One of the titles given to Christ is 'Light of the world'. We are called to be 'children of the light', to 'put on the armour of light' and to live as though we are always 'in the light' and not in the darkness. As people living in the 'times between' Christ's birth and his coming again in glory, we are called to show that light by caring for the gift of creation entrusted to us and by sharing with all people the love of God revealed through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

'Come, O come, Emmanuel' we sing. 'Come, O God-with-us', be with us and walk with us. Help us to be bearers of your Good News, people of light who carry the torch of hope into the darkest corners of the world, people whose joyful hope spreads to hearts that are anxious and afraid, people who, while commemorating the great mystery of the Incarnation, look forward to the eternal joy of Christ's final coming when the whole of creation will be caught up into the unending love of the Trinity.

I hope that this Advent booklet will draw you more deeply into the wonders of God's love and be a catalyst for personal renewal as we prepare to celebrate Christmas.

+ Pat O'Regan

+Patrick O'Regan DD

Archbishop of Adelaide

First Sunday of Advent

INTRO

The time of Advent is often overshadowed by the busyness of our lives in the weeks leading up to Christmas. Let us take a few moments to still our hearts and listen to God's word – spoken to us this week through the prophet Isaiah, through St Paul's letter to the Christians in Rome and through the words of Jesus himself, as portrayed in Matthew's Gospel.

SCRIPTURE

O house of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the Lord! (Isaiah 2:5)

Let us armour ourselves and live in the light... and let our armour be the Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 13:13,15)

Stay awake...because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. (Matthew 24:44)

REFLECTION

Isaiah paints for us an image of an ideal world – in which war and struggle are things of the past and people rejoice to be following the law of the Lord. It is God's presence that allows this transformation to take place, the 'light of the Lord' that enables us to find our way. This theme is picked up in the psalm as we together proclaim, 'Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord.'

The words of the Second Reading and the Gospel are more sober, reminding us that this vision cannot be fully realized until the Lord comes again. As we wait for this second coming we need to be watchful and alert, cultivating a mindful attentiveness to signs of hope and wonder, at the same time living lives worthy of our calling. The theme of 'light' reappears in the Second Reading as St Paul exhorts us to be people of the light, whose armour is Christ himself. If we do this, even though we do not know the hour or the day when Christ will come again, we can live in the sure hope that Isaiah's vision will indeed come about in the fullness of time.

INVITATION TO PRAYER

What do I have to be awake to in my life as I prepare for the final coming of the Lord?

In what ways am I contributing to peace and harmony in our struggling world?

How can I spread the spirit of rejoicing that comes with being close to God, sheltered by God's love, and living by God's laws?

ANTIPHON



*Let us go rejoicing
to the house of the
Lord*

Second Sunday of Advent

INTRO

All manner of things are calling for our attention at this time: we may be busy with end of year gatherings and the school year wrapping up, the pressure of Christmas shopping, planning who will be coming for dinner on Christmas day, we might be anxious about members of our family who are unwell, or difficulties in the workplace, or any number of other issues that crowd into our lives. Let us bring them all to prayer and hand them over to our loving God as we take a few moments to reflect on this second week of Advent.

SCRIPTURE

The root of Jesse shall stand as signal to the people. It will be sought out by the nations and its home will be glorious. (Isaiah 11:10)

United in mind and voice... give glory to God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 15:6)

Prepare a way for the Lord; make straight his paths. Be repentant and produce the appropriate fruit. (Matthew 3:3, 8)

REFLECTION

O for a world in which justice and peace flourish and all nations are drawn to it as to a beacon! This is indeed the world that Isaiah foretells will exist under the leadership of the 'shoot that springs forth from the root of Jesse'. But this world needs to be prepared for if it is to become a reality and today we hear John the Baptist imploring his followers to 'make straight the paths' for the Lord, and to turn their lives around in order to 'bear appropriate fruit'.

Just as then, so today, we too are called to prepare ourselves for Jesus' coming by reforming our lives, by seeking forgiveness, and by standing as beacons of hope in our dark world. St Paul encourages us to pay particular attention to the way we treat each other, being more tolerant and welcoming, more persevering and generous. As we reflect on how we might go about doing this, let us call on the gifts given by the Holy Spirit at our Confirmation: wisdom, insight, knowledge, fortitude, counsel, holiness and awe in God's presence.

INVITATION TO PRAYER

In what ways can I build unity of mind and heart within my family or my community?

What pruning needs to be done within my life so that I can bear more appropriate fruit?

Which gifts of the Holy Spirit can I make best use of at the moment?

ANTIPHON



*Prepare the way of
the Lord;
Make straight his
paths*

MATTHEW 3:3,8

MURRAY RIVER, SA

Seconda Domenica Di Avvento

Translated into Italian by Rosanna Kelly

INTRODUZIONE

Ogni sorta di cose richiamano la nostra attenzione in questo momento: potremmo essere impegnati con le riunioni di fine anno e la conclusione dell'anno scolastico, la pressione dello shopping natalizio e la pianificazione di chi verrà a pranzo il giorno di Natale. Potremmo essere ansiosi per i membri della nostra famiglia che non stanno bene o le difficoltà sul posto di lavoro, o altre questioni che si affollano nella nostra vita. Portiamo tutto nella preghiera e consegniamolo al nostro Dio amorevole, mentre ci prendiamo qualche momento per riflettere su questa seconda settimana di Avvento.

SACRE SCRITTURE

La radice di Iesse si leverà a vessillo per i popoli. Le nazioni la cercheranno con ansia.

La sua dimora sarà gloriosa. (Isaia 11:10)

Perché con un solo animo e una voce sola rendiate gloria a Dio, Padre del Signore nostro Gesù Cristo. (Romani 15:6)

Preparate la via del Signore; raddrizzate i suoi sentieri.

Fate dunque frutti degni del ravvedimento. (Mt 3:3, 8)

RIFLESSIONE

Per un mondo in cui la giustizia e la pace fioriscano e tutte le nazioni siano attratte a loro come a un faro! Questo è davvero il mondo che Isaia predice che esisterà sotto la guida del 'germoglio che spunterà dalla radice di Iesse'. Ma questo mondo ha bisogno di essere preparato per diventare una realtà e oggi sentiamo San Giovanni Battista implorare i suoi seguaci di 'raddrizzate i sentieri' per il Signore, e di cambiare la loro vita per 'portare i frutti appropriati.'

Come allora, così oggi, anche noi siamo chiamati a prepararci alla venuta di Gesù, riformando la nostra vita, cercando il perdono e ponendoci come fari di speranza nel nostro mondo oscuro. San Paolo ci incoraggia a prestare bene attenzione al modo in cui trattiamo gli altri, essendo più tolleranti e accoglienti, più perseveranti e generosi. Mentre riflettiamo su come potremmo fare questo, invociamo i doni dati dallo Spirito Santo in occasione della nostra Cresima: la sapienza, l'intelletto, il consiglio, la forza, la scienza, la pietà e il timore di Dio.

INVITO ALLA PREGHIERA

In che modo posso costruire l'unità della mente e del cuore all'interno della mia famiglia o della mia comunità?

Quale potatura deve essere fatta nella mia vita in modo che io possa portare i frutti più appropriati?

Quali doni dello Spirito Santo posso utilizzare al meglio in questo momento?

ANTIFONA PER LA SETTIMANA



*Preparate la via del
Signore;
raddrizzate i suoi
sentieri.*

MT 3:3,8

LAGO DI CEI, ITALY

Third Sunday of Advent

INTRO

Today marks the midpoint of the Advent season, and the first words that the Church proclaims to us are, 'Rejoice in the Lord always.' Of the four candles on the Advent wreath, three are purple and one is pink. It is the pink one that is lit today, emphasising this spirit of joy.

The readings remind us of why our rejoicing is not misplaced: the signs of God's salvation are already present in the created world as well as in human relationships. We can be confident that God is always near and never forgets us, and blessed shall we be if we do not lose faith but maintain our trust.

SCRIPTURE

Courage! Do not be afraid for your Lord is coming. (Isaiah 35

The blind see again and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised to life and the good News is proclaimed to the poor.

(Matthew 11:5)

REFLECTION

Our God is a God of surprises. We do not expect the deserts to be places where flowers bloom, or that the blind will suddenly see again, the deaf hear and the lame walk. And yet those are to be the signs that God is present. This is what the prophets promised the Chosen People would be coming their way. John the Baptist was among those who had been patiently waiting for the Messiah. Jesus sends him the message to look around and see what is happening: the very signs of salvation foretold by Isaiah are happening before his eyes! Can we imagine the joy that must have come to the blind person whose sight was restored or the deaf person who could suddenly hear again?

As Christians we live in the era of salvation, but we are still called upon to be patient and trusting as we await Christ's second coming in glory. This patience - as St Paul describes it - is not an attitude of 'grin and bear it' but the anticipatory patience of the farmer who looks forward to the time of harvest when the earth will bring forth its precious fruits. It is a patience that has complete trust in God as its foundation.

INVITATION TO PRAYER

What for me are the signs of God's salvation already present in my world. How do I rejoice in them?

Where in my life am I called to be patient? How can I develop a greater patience within my spirit?

How can I be a source of courage, support and joy for those hands are weary, knees are trembling or hearts are faint?

ANTIPHON

A photograph of a woman with long blonde hair, wearing a blue top and white shorts, kneeling in a vast field of bright yellow flowers. She is looking down at something in her hands. The field stretches to a flat horizon under a clear blue sky with a few wispy white clouds. Several trees are scattered across the horizon line.

*Happy are they
who do not lose
faith in God*

Fourth Sunday of Advent

INTRO

Christmas is getting very close now and perhaps we are beginning to panic about all the things that need to be done before December 25. For Mary, the weeks leading up to Jesus' birth would have been a time of excited anticipation as well as a certain anxiety about what lay in store. For St Joseph, too, there were fears about the future. But today's readings remind us that our God is a God of the unexpected, who challenges us to have faith in God's promises, even when they challenge our human ways of understanding.

SCRIPTURE

Do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what in her by the Holy Spirit...to fulfill the words spoken by the Lord through the prophet: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel, a name which means 'God-is-with-us'. (Matthew 1:21)

REFLECTION

This week we are asked to look beyond what seems 'reasonable' and step into the realm of faith: Is it possible that a virgin can conceive a child? Is it possible that this child could be the Son of God? Can someone who has been crucified be raised from the dead? Can someone who has been a fierce persecutor of Christians become an apostle? Under normal circumstances, the answer to each of these questions would be 'No.' However, as we read the words of Isaiah and Paul and Matthew, we notice something very interesting: in each case it is God who offers to us what seems impossible in human terms. What we would not dare to ask for is given without reserve, because God always acts from love. What God asks for in return is faith and trust. As Mary and Joseph, St Paul and so many Christians throughout history have discovered: God's love combined with our faith opens up so many possibilities!

INVITATION TO PRAYER

In what ways am I called to listen with the ears of faith? Can I remember a time that was very challenging for me, when I could not see a way forward? How did I experience God in this situation?

For what special blessings experienced during 2022 can I give thanks to God?

ANTIPHON



*Do not be afraid,
for God is with us.*

ආගමන කාළයේ හතරවන ඉරු දින

Translated into Sinhalese by Madhavi Perera

හැඳින්වීම

නත්තල දැන් ඉතා ළං ළං වෙමින් පවතින අතර දෙසැම්බර් 25 ට පෙර කළ යුතු සියලු දේ ගැන අපි පෙර සූදානම් වීමට පටන්ගනිමු.

මරියාවන්ට, ජේසුස් වහන්සේගේ උපත දැක්වූ මේ සතියේ උද්යෝගිමත් අපේක්ෂාවන් මෙන්ම ඉදිරි කාලයේ සිදු වන්නාවූ දේ ගැන අවිනිශ්චිතව පසු වන කාළයක් වනු ඇත.

ශුද්ධවූ ජුසේ තුමාටද මේ කාළයේදී අනාගතය ගැන බියක් ඇති විය.

නමුත් අද කියවීම අපට මතක් කර දෙන්නේ අපගේ දෙවියන් වහන්සේ අනපේක්ෂිතයන්ගේ දෙවි කෙනෙකු බවත්, දෙවියන් වහන්සේගේ පොරොන්දු කෙරෙහි විශ්වාසය තැබීමට අපට අභියෝග කරන බවත්, ඒවා අපගේ මිනිස් අවබෝධයේ ක්‍රමවලට අභියෝග කරන බවත්ය.

ශුද්ධ ලියවිල්ල

ඇ පුතෙකු බිහි කරන්නී ය; උන් වහන්සේට ජේසුස් යන නාමය තැබිය යුතු ය; මන්ද සිය සෙනඟ ඔවුන්ගේ පාපවලින් මුදාලන්නේ එතුමාණෝ ය"යි කී ය. (ශුද්ධවර මතෙව් 1:21)

මෙහෙහි කිරීම

මේ සතියේ අපෙන් ඉල්ලා සිටින්නේ 'සාධාරණ' යැයි පෙනෙන දෙයින් ඔබ්බට ගොස් ඇදහිල්ලේ ක්ෂේත්‍රයට පිවිසෙන ලෙසයි: කන්යාවකට දරුවෙකු පිළිසිඳ ගත හැකිද? මෙම දරුවා දෙවියන් වහන්සේගේ . පුත්රයා විය හැකිද? කුරුසියේ ඇණ ගසනු ලැබූ කෙනෙකුට මළවුන්ගෙන් නැගිටුවිය හැකිද? කිතුනුවන්ට දරුණු ලෙස පීඩා කළ කෙනෙකුට පේර්රිතයෙකු විය හැකිද? සාමාන්යතත්වයන් යටතේ, මේ සෑම ප්‍රශ්නයකටම පිළිතුර 'නැත' වනු ඇත. කෙසේ වෙතත්, අපි යෙසායාගේ සහ පාවුල්ගේ සහ මතෙව්ගේ වදන් කියවන විට, අපට ඉතා අර්ථවත් යමක් දක්නට ලැබේ: සෑම අවස්ථාවකදීම අපට කළ නොහැකි දෙයක් ලෙස පෙනෙන දේලබා දෙන්නේ දෙවියන් වහන්සේ ය. මානව අර්ථයෙන්. දෙවියන් වහන්සේ සැමවිටම පේර්මයෙන් කිරියා කරන බැවින් අප ඉල්ලා සිටීමට එඩිතර නොවන දේ නොඅඩුව දෙනු ලැබේ. දෙවියන් වහන්සේ ආපසු ඉල්ලා සිටින්නේ ඇදහිල්ල සහ විශ්වාසයයි. මරියා සහ ජෝසප්, ශාන්ත පාවුළු සහ ඉතිහාසය පුරා බොහෝ කිතුනුවන් සොයාගෙන ඇති පරිදි: අපගේ ඇදහිල්ල සමඟ ඒකාබද්ධ වූ දෙවියන් වහන්සේගේ පේර්මය බොහෝ අවස්ථාවන් විවර කරයි!

යාවිඤ්චාවට ආරාධනා

•ඇදහිල්ලේ කන්වලින් සවන් දීමට මා කැඳවනු ලබන්නේ කුමන ආකාරවලින්ද? මා හට ඉදිරි ගමනක් නොපෙනුන ඉතා අභියෝගාත්මක කාලයක් සිහියට නගමු. මෙම තත්වය තුළ මම දෙවියන් වහන්සේව අත්දැක්කේ කෙසේද?

•2022 දී අත්විඳින ලද විශේෂ ආශීර්වාද සඳහා මා දෙවියන් වහන්සේට තුති පුදන්නේ කෙසේද?

සතියේ පිළිතුරු ගැයුම

බිය නොවන්න, මන්ද දෙවියන් වහන්සේ අප සමඟ ය.

Advent Prayer

Christ, our Light and our Way,
our world is experiencing so much darkness and pain.
Bring your light and restoring presence into our lives.

May those who now walk in darkness
be given hope and direction.

May those who feel sorrow and despair
know your compassion and love.

In our busy-ness let us take a few moments each day
to be still and savour your presence.

Let your light be a beacon of hope for families,
a guide for those who rule nations,
a source of courage for those who suffer.

Open our eyes so that we can see you at work in our world.

Christ, our Light, give us your light.

Amen

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