

# FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

## Cycle A

### FIRST READING

The Lord will gather all nations in eternal peace in the kingdom of God

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

2:1-5

This is the vision that Isaiah son of Amoz had  
about Judah and Jerusalem:

In the future the mountain with the Lord's temple  
will be the highest of all.

It will reach above the hills  
and every nation will rush to it.

Many people will come and say,  
"Let's go to the mountain of the Lord God of Jacob  
and worship in his temple."

The Lord will teach us his Law from Jerusalem.  
He will settle the arguments of nations and of people.  
The will pound their swords and their spears into garden tools.  
And they will never make war or attack other nations.

People of Israel, let's live by the light of the Lord.

The word of the Lord

### RESPONSORIAL PSALM

122:1-2, 8-9

**R.** (see 1) Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord.

It made me glad to hear them say,  
"Let's go to the house of the Lord!"  
Jerusalem, we are standing  
inside your gates.

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

Because of my friends  
and my relatives,  
I will pray for peace.  
And because of the house  
of the Lord our God,  
I will work for your good.

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

## SECOND READING

The time is come, our salvation is near.

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans 13:11-13a

Brothers and Sisters:

You know what sort of times we live in,  
and so you should live properly.

It is time to wake up.

You know that the day when we will be saved  
is nearer than when we first put our faith in the Lord.

Night is almost over, and day will soon appear.

We must stop behaving as people do in the dark  
and be ready for the light.

So behave properly, as people do in the day.

The word of the Lord

## ALLELUIA

Psalm 85:8

**R.** Alleluia, alleluia.

**Lord, show us your mercy and love,  
and grant us your salvation.**

R. Alleluia, alleluia

## GOSPEL

Stay awake, you must be ready.

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew

24:37-44

Jesus said to his disciples:

“When the Son of Man appears,  
things will be just as they were when Noah lived.

People were eating, drinking and getting married  
right up to the day that the flood came  
and Noah went into the big boat.

They didn’t know what was happening  
until the flood came and swept them all away.  
That is how it will be when the Son of man appears.

“Two men will be in the same field,  
but only one will be taken.

The other will be left.

Two women will be together grinding grain,  
but only one will be taken.

The other will be left.

“So be on your guard!

You don’t know when your Lord will come.

Homeowners never know when a thief is coming,

and they are always on guard to keep one from breaking in.

Always be ready!

You don’t know when the Son of Man will come.”

The gospel of the Lord.

## 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent – Cycle A

### Prayer:

Dear Jesus,

We are so excited about Christmas coming! Please help us prepare for your coming.

In your name we pray.

Amen

### Readings:

Isaiah 2:1-5

Psalm 122:1-2, 8-9

2 Romans 13:11-13a

Matthew 24:37-44

### Reflection and Discussion Questions:

*(Advanced preparation: Bring a beach ball. Set up two chairs to act as a soccer goal.)*

Be ready! Today is the first Sunday of Advent. Advent is a special time when we take 4 weeks before Christmas to get ready for Christmas.

- *What are we getting ready for at Christmas?* (Let several children answer)
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In today's readings, especially the Gospel, we are told to get ready for the coming of Jesus (not Santa Claus). You have probably talked about the need to get ready for Jesus' coming in school and at home and have maybe talked about a few ways to do this but have you thought about why you get ready for Jesus?

- Ask for a volunteer to be the "goalie." Ask for another volunteer to "shoot" the ball (being careful not to be too aggressive or forceful – we don't want anyone or anything to get hurt)
- Once the goalie is in place and the shooter is ready, talk to and distract the goalie while the shooter takes his/her shot so that the goalie misses it.
- *What happens when the goalie is not paying attention and is not prepared for the shot?* (Let several children answer)
  - They lose the game. They are embarrassed and ashamed.
- Take the beach ball and every so often during the rest of your talk, throw it gently at a student. Remind them to always be ready!
- *Why do we need to be prepared for Jesus?* (Let several children answer)
  - Jesus is a very important part of our lives and we want to be the very best people we can be for Him. We want him to be proud of us. We want to make him happy and be like him.

We can see now why it is so important to get ready for Jesus! How do we do that? (go to the following activity)

*(Continued on page 2)*

**Activity:**

*(Advanced preparation: bring 4 flashlights covered in construction paper or cloth: 3 with purple, 1 with pink.)*

You remember that a couple of today's reading talked about light and how Jesus is the light of the world and how we, too, should be lights for the world. This is a clue to how we are supposed to get ready for Jesus. Lights help us to see the road or path to follow, they help us not be afraid and they help us see others so we don't feel alone. We are to be a light like Jesus and help others see the right path in life and feel loved and happy. The more we do the more light we put out just like the candles on the Advent wreath.

*(Turn on the flashlights one by one as you say the next line)*

Each week we light a new candle and with each additional candle the light becomes brighter.

We are going to say a special prayer asking for Jesus' help and telling him what we will do each week to prepare for him. I will begin the prayer and pass one flashlight to the next person. When you are holding the flashlight tell what you are going to do this week to prepare for Jesus.

***Friend Jesus,***

***Please help us to work hard to be ready when you come! This week I am going to .....to prepare for you.***

*(Pass the flashlight to the closest child to you. They should add what they plan to do this week to prepare. They will then pass the flashlight to the next child, and so on until everyone has had a turn.)*

***Amen!***