



St. John's Parish
Roman Catholic Church

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COME, LORD JESUS

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT - DECEMBER 1, 2024

The Gospel of today's liturgy, the First Sunday of Advent, speaks to us about the Lord's coming at the end of time. Jesus announces bleak and distressing events, but precisely at this point He invites us not to be afraid. Why? Because everything will be okay? No, but because He will come. Jesus will return as He promised. This is what he says: "Stand erect and raise your heads because your redemption is at hand" (Lk 21:28). It is nice to hear this encouraging Word: stand up straight and raise our heads because right during those moments when everything seems to be coming to an end, the Lord comes to save us. We await Him with joy, even in the midst of tribulations, during life's crises and the dramatic events of history. We await Him.

But how do we raise our heads and not become absorbed with difficulties, suffering and defeat? Jesus points the way with a strong reminder: "Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy... Be vigilant at all times and pray" (Lk 21:34, 36).

"Be vigilant": vigilance. Let us focus on this important aspect of the Christian life. From the words of Christ, we see that vigilance is tied to alertness: be alert, do not get distracted, that is, stay awake! Vigilance means this: not to allow our hearts to become lazy or our spiritual life to soften into mediocrity. Be careful because we can become "sleepy Christians" – and we know there are many Christians who are asleep, who are anesthetized by spiritual worldliness - Christians without spiritual fervor, without intensity in prayer, without enthusiasm for mission, without passion for the Gospel; Christians who always look inwards, incapable of looking to the horizon. And this leads to "dozing off": to move things along by inertia, to fall into apathy, indifferent to everything except what is comfortable for us. This is a sad life going forward this way since there is no happiness.

We need to be vigilant so that our daily life does not become routine, and, as Jesus says, so we are not burdened by life's anxieties (cf. v. 34). So today is a good moment to ask ourselves: what weighs on my heart? What weighs on my spirit? What makes me go to sit in the lazy chair? It is sad to see Christians "in the armchair"! What are the mediocrities that paralyze me, the vices that crush me to the ground and prevent me from raising my head? And regarding the burdens that weigh on the shoulders of our brothers and sisters, am I aware of them or indifferent to them? These are good questions to ask ourselves, because they help guard our hearts against apathy. What then is apathy? It is a great enemy of the spiritual life and also of Christian life. Apathy is a type of laziness that makes us slide into sadness, it takes away zest for life and the will to do things. It is a negative spirit that traps the soul in apathy, robbing it of its joy. It starts with sadness sliding downwards so that there is no joy. The Book of Proverbs says: "With all vigilance guard your heart, for in it are the sources of life" (Prov 4:23). Guard your heart: that means to be vigilant! Stay awake and guard your heart.

And let us add an essential ingredient: the secret to being vigilant is prayer. In fact, Jesus says: "Be vigilant at all times and pray" (Lk 21:36). Prayer is what keeps the lamp of the heart lit. This is especially true when we feel that our enthusiasm has cooled down. Prayer re-lights it, because it brings us back to God, to the center of things. Prayer reawakens the soul from sleep and focuses it on what matters, on the purpose of existence. Even during our busiest days, we must not neglect prayer. The prayer of the heart can be helpful for us, repeating often brief invocations. For example, during Advent, we could make a habit of saying, "Come, Lord Jesus." Only these words, but repeating them: "Come, Lord Jesus". This time of preparation leading to Christmas is beautiful: we think of the nativity scene and Christmas, so let us say from the heart: "Come, Lord Jesus". Let us repeat this prayer all throughout the day: the soul will remain vigilant! "Come, Lord Jesus", is a prayer we can all say together three times. "Come, Lord Jesus", "Come, Lord Jesus", "Come, Lord Jesus".

And now we pray to the Madonna: may she who awaited the Lord with a vigilant heart accompany us during our Advent journey.

Upcoming Meeting Reminder: St. John's The Catholic Women's League will be having our final meeting of the year on December 3rd at 6pm in the Parish hall. We will be having our Potluck dinner, so please bring something to contribute if you are able and we will also be collecting items to donate to Marillac Place as well as games and fellowship. Hope to see you there and if you have any questions please reach out to Leah at <leahfriedrich04@gmail.com>

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4TH there will be no 11AM English Mass.

John B. Miller & Friends Advent / Christmas Music Featuring Carrie Guse, Joe Orlando & Andrea Weber-Steckly, on *Thursday December 5th at 7:00 p.m.* No tickets are needed, free will offering to support John B. Miller and Friends, donations may be made in cash at the concert (\$20 per person is suggested).

First Friday of the Month, December 6th Eucharistic Adoration will start at 10am, concluding with Benediction before the 11am Mass.

Sanguen Donation Drive: St. John's Catholic Women's League would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all parishioners for their incredible generosity in supporting both the St. Vincent de Paul Food Drive and the Sanguen Donation Drive. Your kindness and contributions will make a meaningful difference in the lives of those in need. May God bless you all!

ENGLISH SCHEDULE

First Sunday of Advent

<u>Saturday, November 30</u> +Fr. George Stortz	5:00 PM
<u>Sunday, December 1</u> For All Parishioners Living & Deceased	9:00 AM
<u>Tuesday, December 3</u> <small>St. Francisco Xavier</small>	11:00 AM
<u>Wednesday, December 4</u>	NO MASS
<u>Thursday, December 5</u>	11:00 AM
<u>Friday, December 6</u> +Edmund Bleskie	11:00 AM

Second Sunday of Advent

<u>Saturday, December 7</u> +Fr. George Stortz	5:00 PM
<u>Sunday, December 8</u> For All Parishioners Living & Deceased	9:00 AM

HORARIOS EN ESPAÑOL

I Domingo de Adviento

<u>Sabado 30 de noviembre</u>	7:00 PM
<u>Domingo 1 de diciembre</u>	11:00 AM
<u>Domingo 1 de diciembre</u> Por la Comunidad Parroquial	1:00 PM
<u>Martes 3 de diciembre</u> <small>San Francisco Javier</small>	12:00 PM
<u>Miércoles 4 de diciembre</u>	NO HAY MISA
<u>Jueves 5 de diciembre</u> Acción de Gracias Gabriel Quintana	12:00 PM
<u>Viernes 6 de diciembre</u>	12:00 PM

II Domingo de Adviento

<u>Sabado 7 de diciembre</u> +Marvin Castillo Courtade +Ricardo Paloma	7:00 PM
<u>Domingo 8 de diciembre</u>	11:00 AM
<u>Domingo 8 de diciembre</u> Por la Comunidad Parroquial	1:00 PM

MIERCOLES 4 DE DICIEMBRE No habrá Misa de 12PM

Viernes Primero del Mes (6 de Diciembre): El Santísimo Sacramento se expondrá para adoración silenciosa después de la Misa de 12:00 pm hasta las 2:00 pm y nuevamente a partir de las 5:00 hasta las 7:00 p.m.

A las 6 de la tarde se tendrá una Hora Santa, que concluirá con la Bendición con el Santísimo a las 7pm. Durante el tiempo de la Exposición del Santísimo se ofrecerá el sacramento de Reconciliación.