

1st Sunday of Advent, Cycle B

Is 63:16b-17,19b;64:2-7
Ps 80:(4)2-3,15-16,18-19
1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Mark 13:33-37

Monday December 4

Isaiah 2:1-5
Ps 122:1-9
Matthew 8:5-11

Tuesday December 5

Isaiah 11:1-10
Ps 72:1-2,7-8,12-13,17
Luke 10:21-24

Wednesday December 6

Isaiah 25:6-10a
Ps 23:1-6
Matthew 15:29-37

Thursday December 7

St. Ambrose

Isaiah 26:1-6
Ps 118:1,8-9,19-21,25-27a
Matthew 7:21,24-27

Friday December 8 Immaculate Conception

Genesis 3:9-15,20
Ps 98:1-4
Ephesians 1:3-6,11-12
Luke 1:26-38

Saturday December 9

Isaiah 30:19-21,23-26
Ps 147:1-6
Matthew 9:35--10:1,5-8

As we prepare for Christmas, of course we're thinking about how to show fondness and appreciation to the special people in our lives by choosing gifts that will be meaningful to them. And yet, assuming that we can actually find (or make) something that will be appreciated, will the gift really make a difference in the long run?

Since Christmas is the celebration of the birthday of Jesus, let's give him a gift, too – a long-lasting gift. But what can we give to someone who already has everything?

Or does he?

What gift can you give to Jesus that will have an eternal impact, a gift that no one else can give him, a gift he doesn't already have? Here's the answer: What have you been withholding from him?

Today's first reading reminds us that God is our Father. The responsorial Psalm asks the Father to help us turn to him. The second reading

gives thanks to God for all that he has done for us. So – what gift can you give to God to express your appreciation for what he has given to you?

In the Gospel reading, we're reminded of the need to prepare – to actually do something that makes a difference – for the coming of Christ. This not only refers to his Second Coming; it's also about the day when he comes for us as we breathe our last earthly breaths. And it's about the way he wants to come to you this



Christmas. And it's about the way he is coming to you right now, today.

There's something new that he wants to give you. When he offers it, will he find you doing what's right (as in the first reading)? Will he find you using your spiritual gifts (as in the second reading)? Will he find you alert and ready to do his bidding (as in the Gospel reading)?

Advent is an opportunity to take notice of the gifts he gives us and become aware of the gifts we can give to him that he doesn't already have. It should make an eternal difference – for him *and* for us.

Reflect & Discuss:

1. List the gifts that God has given to you. Then think about how much appreciation you have given to God for the gifts on that list. Do you know how much he appreciates your appreciation?
2. Name ways that Jesus comes to us today.
3. What will you do this Advent to become more aware of Jesus coming to you?
4. How will this make you more ready for Christmas?