



1st Sunday of Advent, Cycle C

Jeremiah 33:14-16
Ps 25:4-5,8-10,14
1 Thes 3:12-4:2
Luke 21:25-28,34-36

Monday Nov. 30 St. Andrew

Romans 10:9-18
Ps 19:8-11
Matt 4:18-22

Tuesday Dec. 1

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

Wednesday Dec. 2

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

Thursday Dec. 3 St. Francis Xavier

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

Friday Dec. 4

Isaiah 29:17-24
Ps 27:1,4,13-14
Matt 9:27-31

Saturday Dec. 5

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

What's been stealing your joy? This Advent, let's prepare for Christmas by asking Jesus to restore our joy. Today's world needs Christians who know that following Christ truly gives us hope in the midst of financial worries, comfort in the midst of hardships, and joy despite all our difficulties.

Taking this even further, today's world needs Catholics who truly understand that going to Mass is a good thing. Are you changed by the presence of Christ in the Word and in the Eucharist? If so, then when you exit the church, you are filled with joy – right? And others see this joy – right?

There's a difference between "knowing" the truths of our faith and authentically living these truths. And our authenticity is what others need from us.

Think of the prayer requests you've made in which you're still waiting for Jesus to provide his help.

When you offer them to Jesus during the prayers of Mass, do you feel hopeful? There is no joy without first experiencing hope.

During the consecration of the Eucharist, the priest asks Jesus to free us from all anxieties. We cannot feel hopeful when anxiety prevents us from recognizing that Jesus is coming to us in the Eucharist.

In Sunday's Gospel reading, Jesus speaks of his Second Coming, but we can also relate it to our daily lives

today. Think of the possibility of new tribulations looming just ahead, unknown and unpredictable. Jesus wants to help you prepare for this. However, when our focus is on our troubles instead of on Christ, we're ruled by anxiety, not hope, and certainly not joy.

When our hearts become spiritually grooved, we forget to remain centered in Christ. We neglect to listen for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. But when we ask Jesus to restore our joy, we become vigilant, expectant, and aware that we have to rely on him for the strength to endure whatever comes our way.

What the world fears is a reason for anxiety is in reality – for true Christians – a reason to hope in Jesus and to live in the joy that comes from trusting him. It's not easy! It takes conscious effort. But spiritual drowsiness is a miserable way to live.

Reflect & Discuss:

1. What are you waiting for from Jesus?
2. How will you use the Season of Advent to overcome anxiety by noticing the loving, generous, merciful activities of God?
3. What are your favorite ways to prepare for Christmas?
4. How do you make Advent a season of hope and a time of growing closer to God? Share your ideas with the other community members and listen for new ideas that you can adopt.