

This Week's Readings

First Reading: Isaiah 63: 16-17, 64: 1, 3-8.

The prophet admits the sinfulness of God's people, but begs the Lord to come and save us.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1: 3-9.

Paul assures us that God continues to look after us until Christ comes again.

Gospel: Mark 13: 33-37.

"Stay awake"; the Lord may come unexpectedly.



Points for Reflection

Today begins the liturgical season of Advent. Its purpose is to prepare us, Christ's believers, to celebrate Christmas with the proper attitude of mind and heart. During our preparation for Christmas, the Word of God we hear during Mass helps us to think of the whole history of salvation.

"Advent" means "coming. It is God's coming to mankind, out of his free initiative. **He reveals himself as a loving Father (First Reading)**, who cares for his children and forgives their sins. His coming to mankind has been unceasing since he created man out of love, but the climax of his loving interventions in human history was and is Jesus Christ. **God's love for us has its fullest manifestation in Jesus:** in his life, death and resurrection. Since the coming of Jesus Christ, it is through him that God "comes" to us: it is through him that God enlightens us, guides us and moves human history according to his merciful plan of salvation.

"Advent", therefore, tells us that God has come to mankind not only once, at Christmas; but that he is still coming to us through his Spirit, until Jesus Christ his Son will be revealed again at the end of times. This means two important things:

1. **It is possible and it is a duty for us to get everyday closer to God.** We never know and love God enough. There is always something new for us to discover in him. There is always a new step towards love, forgiveness, generosity, and spirit of service, which the Spirit of Christ is asking us to take. There is always something unforeseeable and challenging in what Christ expects of us. It is possible for us to have an everyday closer relationship with him in life and in prayer.
2. **The attitude of Christians to their Lord, who is always coming, is "vigilance": "Be watchful! Be alert!"** This is the "Advent" invitation of Christ to his disciples. "Vigilance" means that we should always keep the eyes and ears of our spirit "open", in order to be able at any time to perceive the

Spirit's invitations to follow Christ everyday closer. "Vigilance" makes us aware that, however happy and successful life may be, it is incomplete without God; it is not meaningful unless we let it be guided by his Spirit. In times of trouble and distress, of failure and sorrow, it is easier for us to realize how much we need God. But when things seem to go smoothly, "vigilance" helps us not to be so distracted and attracted by earthly things that we forget all about what makes our lives truly meaningful and worth living, that we forget that Christ will come again to take all creation to the Father. As we wait, the Spirit of Christ, present in us, fills us with his gifts and the love of Christ, helping us to live a Christ-like life, to spread the good news of his coming and to bring others the same hope we have. We do not know when Christ will come in glory. As I said, we must be watchful, we must stay awake to the signs of God's Kingdom around us, awake to the opportunities of serving others, whether in our families, at work, in our parish, or in the wider community beyond the frontiers of the Church.

May the Spirit of Lord be our light and our strength, and may the Blessed Virgin Mary be with us with her motherly and tender care.

Sacred Heart Church Sai Kung (E-mail: sacredheart@netvigator.com)	
Phone: Office hours: 27922967 (with answering machine) After office hours: 27920181 Fax: 27922967	Eucharistic Celebrations: Sundays: 9.00 am (English) 7.45 am (Chinese) 10.30 am (Chinese) Anticipated Sunday Masses Saturdays: 6.00 pm (English) 7.30 pm (Chinese) Public holidays: 8.00 am (Chinese) Weekdays: 7.00 am (Chinese)
Parish Priest: Fr Carlo Tei carlotei@i-cable.com carlotei@gmail.com Fr Sergio Ticozzi, Sr Mary Leung (helping on Sundays)	Confessions: Sundays before Mass and during the 7.45 am Mass Weekdays on call
Secretary: Miss Tse Choi Ping Office hours: Mon-Fridays: 9.00am – 1.00pm; 2.00pm – 5.30pm Sundays: 8.45am – 12 noon	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament: Thursdays: 2.30 pm 1 st Thursday of the month: 8.00 pm
Parish Council Chairlady: Miss Candy Chan Tel: 23265322	

Kids' Corner

11/30/08 - Mark 13:33-37 *"Be Alert! You do not know when the time will come."*

Across

1. "What I say to you, I say to all: ' _____!'"
2. You do not know when the _____ will come.

Down

1. Jesus told his disciples to be _____.
3. This week, we read from the Gospel of _____.

