

## December; another Advent, another opportunity

*Jesus said to His disciples: "There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on earth nations will be in dismay, perplexed by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will die of fright in anticipation of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. But when these signs begin to happen, stand erect and raise your heads because your redemption is at hand. Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy from carousing and drunkenness and the anxieties of daily life, and that day catch you by surprise like a trap. For that day will assault everyone who lives on the face of the earth. Be vigilant at all times and pray that you have the strength to escape the tribulations that are imminent and to stand before the Son of Man."*

*Luke 21: 25-28, 34-36*

This reading is from the first Sunday of Advent. In this passage from the gospel of St. Luke, Jesus says what He means and means what He says. The message is unmistakable. I respect a man who is clear and firm because you don't have to wonder what he means and I expect nothing less from God. Advent has arrived. When Advent begins everything changes, literally. Liturgically Advent is like New Years. This Advent marks the beginning of the "C" cycle of the Sunday readings. The readings of the three year liturgical cycle are arranged like this;

- A. Year of Matthew
- B. Year of Mark
- C. Year of Luke

(John is interspersed throughout the three year cycle on holy days.)

This is the year where we focus on the gospel of St. Luke, an account filled with beauty and some other really cool stuff.

For me, the most unique thing about Luke is how the first couple of chapters focus on the conception and early years of Jesus. For people who don't read the Scriptures regularly, these chapters reveal a lot about the Holy Family in general and the Blessed Virgin Mary in particular. It's from the passages of these first chapters that we get the "Hail Mary" prayer and knowledge that God's promise in the garden will be fulfilled. Salvation is about to come into the world.

Luke, the author of this book, must have spent a great deal of time interviewing Mary the mother of God to get such detailed accounts of the events leading up to and surrounding the birth of Jesus. In the classes I teach I always re-visit the fall of Adam and Eve in the garden. If our first parents hadn't fallen then



Jesus wouldn't have needed to come into the world to save us; oh happy fault!

The gospel account is real, Jesus, Mary and Joseph are real, sin is real and salvation is necessary. The passage above alerts us to the possibilities.

As I mentioned in my October article, Advent is a time of preparation and penance; preparation because salvation is coming into the world and penance because we can't be in the presence of God with sin in our hearts.



How have we prepared for our encounter with God when He comes again? This passage shows us two choices;

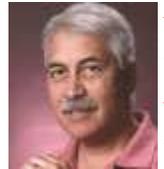
1. ***“People will die of fright in anticipation of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.”*** It sounds like His second coming will be hard to ignore. Or;
2. ***”But when these signs begin to happen, stand erect and raise your heads because your redemption is at hand.”*** Stand tall and be recognized, your reward is at hand.

Where will you stand on that day? Tempus Fugit Memento Mori. Prepare.



**Ed Ibarra**

[Lecturer10644@yahoo.com](mailto:Lecturer10644@yahoo.com)



December business meeting is on Tuesday December 4th at 7:00pm. Second Friday Memorial Mass for the deceased Knights of this council is on Friday, December 14th at 5:45pm followed by the Respect Life Rosary. Don't forget to make a good confession and get cleaned up spiritually

Pray that God give us the grace to seek Him in prayer. Pray for the men and women who serve in Law Enforcement and the Military. Pray that politicians have conversion of heart. Pray for strong families. Above all; pray that Holy Mother Church around the world can withstand the buffets of her enemies. Pray for our priests.