

This Sunday's Counsel

THEME:

We prepare for Christ's coming when we turn to Him and live holy lives.

PROMISE:

"He will keep you firm to the end, irrep-
roachable on the day of our Lord Je-
sus Christ." (1 Cor 1: 8)

WORD:

Is 63: 16b-17, 19b,
64: 2-7/ Ps 80: 2-3,
15-16, 18-19/ 1 Cor
1: 3-9/ Mk 13: 33-37

ORDER:

- *Be watchful! Be alert!* (Mk 13: 33)

DIRECTIONS:

- Live a prayerful life, meditate on God's word and obey His commandments diligently.
- Avail of the sacrament of penance and receive the Holy Eucharist.
- Be of service to others.



BLD Trenton



Community News

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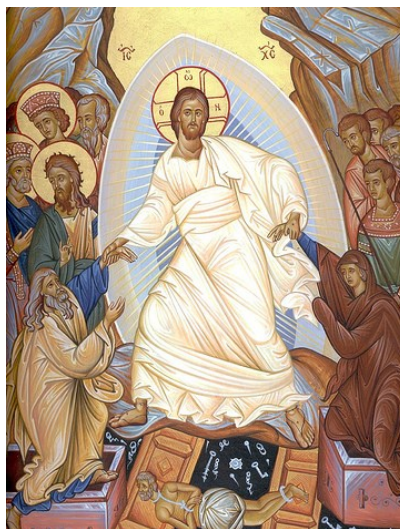
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December 1, 2023

Be Firm And Blameless

REFLECTION:

The new Liturgical Year starts with the 1st Sunday of Advent. Advent ushers in the coming of the Christmas season and we express our joyful anticipation through the external signs of Christmas; colorful lights and decorations, parties and gatherings, gift-giving, travel and other activities that lift up the spirit. But spiritual preparation is far different when Advent is here. It is a time to reflect that we are helpless people and we need God back in our lives. In the Psalms, we intone: *Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.* God never dictates His will on us to do anything. He gives us the gift of freedom, but He never forces us to love. Advent makes us realize that we have abused our freedom and now we need to go back to God, reconnect our spirit with His, and hope to be saved. This we can do by preparing our hearts for the coming of Jesus. As our theme for the



week states: God's presence keeps us watchful and fully committed to Christ.

The gospel of Mark for the 1st Sunday of Advent is relatively short, but it contains a very intense and uncompromising message from our Lord, Jesus Christ: *"Be watchful! Be alert! You do not know when the time will come,"* (Mk 13: 33). By our human nature, we have the tendency to buy time and postpone doing things to

the last minute. Jesus is aware of this tendency as He tells us, through the parable of the gatekeeper, to keep watch always because there is no certain time when the lord of the house will return. Jesus emphasizes the need to be obedient and watchful and uses the word "watch" three times to let us know that He, our Master and King, might return unexpectedly and He might just find us unprepared to face Him for judgment.

Advent reminds us to be vigilant in

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From Our Spiritual Directors

"The Lord is coming, always coming. When you have ears to hear and eyes to see, you will recognize Him at any moment of your life. Life is Advent; life is recognizing the coming of the Lord!"

~ Henri Nouwen

Indeed, all of life is Advent! As we begin a new liturgical year, we are blessed with the good news of Christ's coming. We begin this year with the season of Advent—a time of joyful preparation and conversion leading up to the birth of our savior.

During this time, we direct our hearts and minds as to why we celebrate Christmas, the reason for the season—that is, the celebration of the anniversary of our Lord's birth. Once again, we are assured in a most overwhelming way that God always keeps his promises; for on that first Christmas, He sent his only Son Jesus, the long-awaited fulfillment of God's promise of salvation. Most especially, the Advent season is all

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You can now send your tithes and love offerings via **Paypal**.
Donate link can be found at
www.bldtrenton.com

Or mail check to:
BLD Trenton Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box 1367
Toms River, NJ 08754

The Lord's Provision

November 24, 2023

Tithe :\$375.00
Love Offering :\$322.00

Thank you for your generosity!!!

God's Blessings

Birthday

Charisse Bacalso	12/2	Jerry Subang	12/5
Agnes Raymundo	12/2	Jomar Javier	12/5
Val Antona	12/3	Leo Alquiros	12/6
Clarissa Gomez	12/3	Rey Duma	12/6
Helen Hernandez	12/3	Maricar Parra	12/6
Rica Torralba	12/3	Norms Llave	12/7
Jun Torralba	12/3	Lucy Mabunay	12/7

Anniversary

Mike & Argie Salada 12/5

*Make me turn to you, O Lord,
give me new life,
and I will call upon your name.*

Christian Proclamation

Did you know?
The first who need to be evangelized are us: we Christians. And this is very important. Immersed in today's fast-paced and confused environment, we too indeed may find ourselves living our faith with a subtle sense of renunciation, persuaded that the Gospel is no longer heard and no longer worth striving to proclaim. We might even be tempted by the idea of letting "others" go their own way.

And one discovers that humanity abounds with brothers and sisters waiting for a word of hope. The Gospel is awaited even today. People of today are like people of all times: they need it. Even the civilization of programmed unbelief and institutionalized secularity; indeed, especially the society that leaves the spaces of religious meaning deserted, needs Jesus. This is the right moment for the proclamation of Jesus.

Christian proclamation is a joy for everyone. When we truly meet the Lord Jesus, the wonder of this encounter pervades our life and demands to be taken beyond us. He desires this, that His Gospel is for everyone.

~ Pope Francis

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about reflecting on how we can prepare our hearts and homes for Christ's birth and second coming at the end of time.

As we do all these and anticipate for the baby Jesus to be born, we also remember our reason to hope. It is the beautiful task of Advent to awaken in all of us memories of goodness and love, and thus to open doors of hope. As one family—the BLD community - let us mark the season of Advent by loving and serving others with God's own love and concern for us. Let us allow the light of Christ to shine through us...for all of life is Advent.

Wishing you all a blessed Advent!

+Sincerely in Christ,

Rev. Roy Ballacillo and Rev. Mark Nillo

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waiting for Jesus who has already come and is ever present in every situation of our lives. But we need to be attentive in living our life to follow where His Spirit leads us, understand what He wants us to do, and make the conscious decision at all times to be Christ-like in character, that we may remain fit for His purpose and plan for us. And when our time on earth is over, we may be found worthy of the promise of eternal life with God the Father in heaven.

As Christians, we face the danger of being indifferent to our faith. Material well-being, distraction and shallowness can easily dull the human spirit. Our souls are restless, so we must always question the ways of the world and react to them with the

mind of Christ. We are warned against the danger of false tranquility, the kind that makes us indifferent, lacking in inspiration, lost in our self-centeredness and oblivious to the happening around us. This behavior will merit the judgment of Christ.

But the hope of Advent is to be "watchful" and "alert." We are to be vigilant and prepared by allowing the Fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23) to reside in us – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. For through these, God will keep us firm and blameless for the time of His coming. That is His promise in 1Corinthian 1:8 "He will keep you firm to the end, irreproachable on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The message of Jesus' second

coming, which echoes during the season of Advent, reminds us that we must live as if Jesus were to appear the next minute. This is the time that we make Jesus the most important person in our life. This is the choice we cannot afford to postpone.

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, help us to be always ready and watchful, not only during Advent but every moment of our lives, always anticipating and waiting to see You face to face. Teach us to live a simple but spiritually enriched life. Set us free from the complexities of this world, so that as we journey in our faith, we will not reach the end unprepared, but we will be worthy to receive Your eternal reward. Amen.

Adapted from www.bldworld.org