

1st Sunday of Advent (Cycle C) Homily
St. William, Champion | November 28, 2021
Jer 33:14-16 | 1 Thes 3:12-4:2 | Lk 21:25-28, 34-36

Deacon Robert Mintus

Happy New Year! Today we celebrate the beginning of the liturgical year of the Church. And that new year begins with something important, something we refer to as Advent, something that means coming. There are signs all around us at Mass today that remind us that something is different. You won't see Father (or me) in any green vestments for a while. The environment here looks different. We get to see the Advent wreath again, with the four candles that count down to Christmas. And Pat will be leading us in songs that we reserve for this time of year. In those songs, we find the themes of waiting, longing, and hope.

In our American culture, the idea of patience seems to be a forgotten virtue. We want to rush, to do everything fast, don't we? We have drive-through pickup for everything – our morning coffee, breakfast, lunch, dinner, and even the prescription medicines we need. We simply

click an icon on our computer and whatever we need is charged right to our credit card and shipped right to our house – maybe even the next day. We hate lines and judge things based on how quickly they are done. Sometimes this even finds its way into our worship. Heaven help us if we take the time to sing all the verses of a song, or even worse, if the homily is longer than usual.

But in reality, waiting isn't always a bad thing. In most cases, knowing what is coming helps us to focus, and take the time to prepare for it. An engagement gives a young couple time to prepare to live a life together. To an expectant parent, those nine months give them time to prepare for the arrival of a new little one. It is what we do in that time of waiting that is so important.

Our Gospel today reminds us that Jesus Christ will come again in glory. And the signs that Jesus speaks of – well, they could be right now, couldn't they? We have no shortage of catastrophes around us. We've

seen recent scandal within our Church, and there's plenty of civil unrest in the world, as well as tons of economic uncertainty.

Jesus words to his disciples were not meant just for them back in the first century, but also for us today as well: "But when these signs begin to happen, stand erect and raise your heads because your redemption is at hand." Don't let yourself get caught up in all of that drama. Don't let yourself become a prisoner to fear and anxiety of the world in which you are living. I am coming again to make everything right and I have power over everything. Be patient! Don't lose hope!

But Jesus also cautions us to be ready and waiting for him, to be "vigilant at all times" and to pray. This Advent, what are some of the things we can do to make room for Jesus in our lives? Perhaps we could come Tuesday for Advent Lessons and Carols here at 7PM. Or we could come to a communal reconciliation service or come to private reconciliation. Maybe we have a relationship that is in need of mending – wouldn't this be a good time to do so? Maybe we could set aside some

extra time for prayer each day. Maybe we could make a sincere attempt to go out of our way to show our love to those around us this holiday season, especially those who are most in need. And if we fail to do those things, maybe each time that we find ourselves waiting during this Advent season – whether it is waiting to join our friends at a gathering, sitting in traffic, waiting a line at a store, or even waiting for the web page to load up on our computer – we can prayerfully reflect on the simple fact that Jesus Christ is the most important thing as together we wait for him.