

1st Advent - A 2022-23
Is. 2.1-5///Romans 13.11-14///Matt. 24.37-44

→a “wake up call”...a once popular service provided by hotels has gone by the wayside for the most part these days because of cell phones

→but in the past...all you had to do is let the front desk know the night before when you want to receive your “wake up call” and the phone would within a minute or two of the requested time

→wake-up calls in hotels used to be a necessity...but not so these days...there are, however, other types of wake-up calls that sometime happen in aspects of life

→in fact we use that phrase in many different ways depending on the situation

→some commentators and pundits have characterized the recent election as a wake- up call for our country

→environmentalists ascribe global warming, melting glaciers, and rising seas as a "wake-up" call for us to do something about the way we are managing the environment

→the pandemic, the economy, and even sports teams have also used this metaphor as well

→even in our own lives....we are often served many “wake-up calls” about our health, families, jobs, and relationships....

→a simple visit to the doctor learning that your cholesterol is too high can be a wake-up call

→a family member slipping into destructive behavior,

→getting a lay-off notice from your job,

→or having a some one who has been a significant part of your life....walk away

→..... are all examples of what can be considered a “wake up call”

→and even in today's Scripture readings.... we hear about a wake-up call regarding the coming of Christ

→in the second reading we are told..."to wake from our sleep" and the Gospel invites us to "stay awake...and be prepared" for the coming of the Lord.

PAUSE

→today is 1st Sunday of Advent, you might say it is a "wake-up call" for our faith

→because today we leave the old behind and make a new start

→we start a new liturgical season, a new Church year, and a renewed time of waiting for God to enter our world and life more fully

→our Scripture readings today "wake us up" to this new beginning,

→the gospel reading from Matt. -----talks about the end the world happening in order to reveal the coming of the kingdom of God.

--Paul in his letter to the Romans tells us that the hour is upon us to awake from our sleep and get ready

--and finally, the prophet Isaiah foretells us that in the coming days all will look towards and wait for the kingdom of God here on earth

→and so, this "wake up" Sunday begins a season of waiting for God to come, of preparing for the Lord

→the basic message of the Gospel today, and every Advent is tostay awake...be on guard...be prepared....for the Lord is coming at a time you least expect

---that is what Advent is all about

---and that is what our faith is about

PAUSE

→we gather here each week, as people committed to the Gospel, we strive to be like Christ waiting with anxious hearts for His coming, in the same way young children wait with anxious hearts for Christmas morning.

→but you see the difference between what is happening in here as opposed to what is happening out there...//.....is that as the world is waiting for a holiday...while we await the coming of Christ.

→I have often said that...perhaps at no other time of the year than right now is our Church more counter-cultural....

→because everywhere in our world, in our lives and homes...we are getting ready for Christmas...and yet here in Church, the scripture reading, the liturgy, and our gathering urge us to get ready for the coming of Christ at the end of time

PAUSE

→every Advent season is the continuation of the story that began in Bethlehem some 2000 years ago...Jesus came to us from heaven to a manger.....and today's gospel is waking us up to that story....reminding us to be vigilant, awake and ready for the Lord when he comes

→and so for our part...Advent is a time for us to wake up, but unlike the world out there that is waking up and preparing for Christmas, in here our are about being awake and prepared for the coming of Christ in his kingdom

→as Matt. Writes to us....."the Lord is coming at the time you least expect."

→Dec. 25 remembers and celebrates the beginning....

→**Advent**...this Advent and every Advent is about our preparing and waiting for the end

→and so, on this 1st Sunday of Advent, as we wake up...and continue.....our preparation and waiting for the Lord.

→let us use this time to.....not to look forward...so much....to the birthday of Jesus

→but rather let us look towards the coming of Christ in his kingdom,

→a kingdom that all of us someday hope share in

→and perhaps better yet....let us use this time as **our wake-up call** to remind ourselves to stay awake...to be prepared and to get ready for ...the coming of Christ.