

The First Sunday of Advent

Come, Lord Jesus!

Reflections for the
Season of Advent

In the words of

The saints



“Jesus, help me to
simplify my life by
learning what You want
me to be and becoming
that person.”

-St. Therese of Lisieux

Advent Challenge

Turn off the phone,
1 turn off the
tv, and tune
into God. Spend an
hour in Adoration or
prayer during the
week.

Turn off the radio and
2 discover a
Podcast to get
you to work.

*Catholic Answers Live,
Catholic Stuff You Should
Know, Among the Lilies,
The Anchor and Quill.*

Put down the fork, and
3 take a moment to
say grace before
your meal: taking time
to thank God for the
meal you are about to
receive, and praying for
those that go without
that day.

Rachel Scott struggled in a school filled with many cliques. The jocks bullied the nerds. The goths were made fun of by the cheerleaders. It was a school like many today; filled with outsiders. Her whole life, Rachel had wanted to help and bring people

together, but this constant bullying she witnessed left her disheartened. Rachel was relatively popular in the school because of her fun-loving personality, and the smile that she always had on her face. It wasn't until Rachel joined a local Youth Group and began wearing a cross visibly around her neck, that she began to truly experience the suffering of others.

Different groups began to make fun of her because of her outward sign of faith, and her popularity in the

school started to plummet. This only encouraged Rachel to keep at her goal of bringing people together. Rachel began to form a group of these outcasts within the school; helping them to feel included. While it wasn't always easy for her, Rachel's hope is what kept her going.

One day, as she was sitting on a hill outside of the school, two students walked up to her. They were wearing dark trench coats on this warm spring day. As the first students approached Rachel, he asked her "Do you still believe in God?" Rachel responded nervously confident, "You know I do!" The student responded, "then go be with him!" as he raised his gun towards her.

Rachel became the first victim at Columbine High School in 1999. While she is just one of many that day, it was her actions that left a lasting legacy in the community. Rachel brought hope to others that felt like they were outcast. She reached out to those that her school society said was not worth it and welcomed them into her group.

This Sunday, as we celebrate the first Sunday of Advent, we focus on the theme of Hope. What is it that gives us our hope every day? What have we done to be that hope for others? As Saint Peter reminds us, we need to "always be prepared to give the reason for our hope." (1 Peter 3:15) That hope comes from Jesus, and through us to the world.

Advent Prayer

Dear Jesus, you are the hope in our messy world. This Advent, help us slow down, listen to your voice, and focus on what's really important. We place our hope in you as we prepare our hearts to celebrate your birth on Christmas.

Amen.

Come, Lord Jesus!



Pastor's Perspective

Pope Benedict wrote in his encyclical about Christian hope that “people who have Hope live differently.” This virtue is not just simple optimism; rather, Hope is the gift that God gives us that reminds us that He has a purpose for the world and for each one of us. Hope might be oriented toward the future, but it changes the present. In our world, many cynical people will scoff at Hope as pointless or unrealistic, and their lives can reflect that. When we lose sight of Hope we become turned in on ourselves and selfish. However, when we open ourselves up to that great gift, we see the world in a new light. Everything has a purpose; we have a purpose! Jesus came into the world at a dark time and restored human Hope because the Father wants us to live differently. May our Advent be colored with that same Hope that God gives.

Fr. Austin

A BIBLICAL WALK THROUGH ADVENT

Date	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Verse	Isaiah 52:7-9	Isaiah 40:9-11	Genesis 3:8-15	Genesis 15:1-6	Deut 18:15-19	Psalm 89:1-4	Isaiah 11:1-10

Pastoral Council Perspective

Submitted by Melissa Barrios: Chair of the Pastoral Council

I once read, “Our hope for our future is found in our past.” As Christians, knowing and believing the ultimate example of sacrificial love, Jesus Christ, gives us such a strong beacon of hope to what we know our future can hold...eternal life. During the dark times of our world, the miracles of yesterday give us hope in God’s power today.

Many of us have all faced the feeling of brokenness. To overcome brokenness we must have hope. But wishful Hope is worldly hope and will only give us temporary peace. When we have hope IN Jesus each and every day, our lives are made full with peace and joy.

Jesus **IS** hope and hope is now. It is important to bring hope to other people because it helps bring you the outcome of the hope you are seeking.

How can you be a beacon of hope to others, like Jesus is for us, this advent season?