



First Sunday of Advent November 29, 2020

Be watchful! Be alert!

You do not know when
the time will come.

— Mark 13:33

MARK'S JESUS

Mark's Gospel is the shortest and tersest of all four. The discourses of Jesus tend to be terser as well. Mark's portrayal of Jesus has none of the poetry of the Sermon on the Mount or the Sermon on the Plain as in Matthew or Luke, nor the extensive, reflective "I Am" discourses as in John. Mark's Jesus "cuts to the chase," we would say today. This is reflected quite well in today's passage.

It is no accident that the dialogue of Jesus at this point in the Gospel according to Mark—the concluding words about the end of the world—immediately before his passion, is riddled with exclamation points and an overall sense of urgency.

We would do well to re-tool our own way of living this Advent, for we live in a world urgently in need of hearing the message of Jesus proclaimed. It's time for us to "wake up!" and get out into the world to do it.

—J. S. Paluch Co.

FEAST OF FAITH

What is the Mass?

What is the Mass? There is no simple answer to that question. The Church uses many different images and terms to describe our most important prayer. The Mass is the celebration of the Eucharist, a Greek word that means "thanksgiving." It is the Lord's Supper. It is the Breaking of the Bread. It is the memorial of the Lord's passion, death, and resurrection. It is the Holy Sacrifice, in which the sacrifice of Christ on the cross is perpetuated. It is the holy and divine liturgy, the sacred mysteries. It is the source and summit of our Christian lives, the new covenant, the work of the Holy Spirit, the paschal mystery. The many different words and images that we use when we speak of the Mass are not signs of confusion, but of wonder at what the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1328) calls the "inexhaustible richness" of the Eucharist. The Mass, our greatest prayer and our deepest mystery, is celebrated every day, many times a day, the world over. The Eucharist is both "bread from heaven" and "daily bread." The Mass is our everyday miracle.

—Peter Scagnelli, ©J. S. Paluch Co.

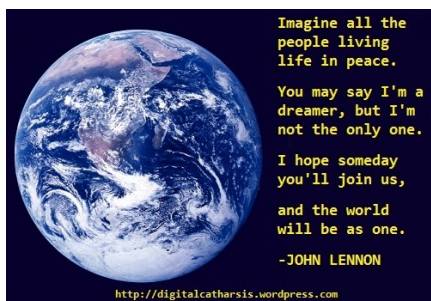
READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: Rom 10:9-18; Ps 19:8-11; Mt 4:18-22
Tuesday: Is 11:1-10; Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17; Lk 10:21-24
Wednesday: Is 25:6-10a; Ps 23:1-6; Mt 15:29-37
Thursday: Is 26:1-6; Ps 118:1, 8-9, 19-21, 25-27a; Mt 7:21, 24-27
Friday: Is 29:17-24; Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14; Mt 9:27-31
Saturday: Is 30:19-21, 23-26; Ps 147:1-6; Mt 9:35 — 10:1, 5a, 6-8
Sunday: Is 40:1-5, 9-11; Ps 85:9-14; 2 Pt 3:8-14; Mk 1:1-8

BIG AMBITION

Give up your small
ambitions;
come with me to
save the world.

—St. Francis Xavier



<http://digitalcatharsis.wordpress.com>

Finance Corner: Your generosity is greatly needed and appreciated!

For the month of **November** offerings:

PLEASE mail to St. Philip/St. Teresa Parish, P. O. Box 339, Occidental CA 95465. Or donate at our website www.stphilipstteresa.org via Paypal or card. *Include your offering envelope # with your donation.*

[Nov. 1-11] 1st Collections: \$2957.

2nd Collections: \$435.00. Rural Food: \$1175.

11/29: Rural Food. 12/6: Retirement Fund for Religious

Mark your Calendar for Future Events & Meetings:

Parish Council [PC]: TBA Zoom

Finance Council [FC]: TBA Zoom

Liturgy Committee: TBA Zoom

St. Teresa Ladies Guild: Contact Diane, 823-6044

St. Philip Ladies Guild: Contact Penny, 559-367-7403

Centering Prayer ZOOM: Tues. noon/Fri. 9:30am - info www.stphilipstteresa.org

Coffee & Goodies: cancelled for now

Mondays & Wednesdays-Seniors Lunch at 12noon: cancelled for now

Qi Gong Tai Chi [Thurs.] & AA [Fri.]: cancelled for now

✠ ♥ ✠ Mass Intentions ✠ ♥ ✠ Schedule

11/29 Sun. 8am Mass for the People

11/29 Sun. 9:30am Mass ✠ Bob Tiller

12/06 Sun. 8am Mass for the People

12/06 Sun. 9:30am Mass ✠ Marcella & Joseph Kiefer

Prayer Requests: Leave a message at 707-408-2650.

Teresa K., Pat K., Thomas T., Susan B., Lorri McC., Sarah, Clifford J., Terri A., Fred P., Theresa S., Sara, Mary Anne P., Barbara, Dave C., Jim P., William, Parson P., Dave, Mary O., Bill Z., Daniel, Sally T., Mary K., Michael D., Richard M., Kathleen, Peter, Rosa S., Susan B., Joyce D., Anita C., George H., Mimi H, Steve, Barry, Lorrin K., Hugh P., Robert S., Britney N., Jacque W., Rebecca A., April K., Jacinta G., Leo A., Ed C. family, Kathy R., Donna W., Jim K., Sherry S., Papke family., Gail F., Marie N., Christine, James, Dennis M., Art H., Lynn, Gary S., Peter R., Gerry N.

SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

Monday: St. Andrew, Apostle
Tuesday: World AIDS Awareness Day
Thursday: St. Francis Xavier
Friday: St. John Damascene
Friday: First Friday
Saturday: First Saturday

PARISH MEMO

November-- The times and locations of our outdoor Sunday Masses:

St. Philip's, 8:00am in the parking lot fronting St. Philip's church;

St. Teresa's, 9:30am on the steps of St. Teresa's church.

[Note: Rain or extreme weather cancels Masses for the day.]

The 9:30am Mass is also being live broadcast using Zoom. See below for login information.

Please mute your microphone and turn off video when joining.

The Zoom will begin at 9:15 with Mass at 9:30. Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85354104721?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85354104721?pwd=SHVsbEpnL3gvWHJ4NGZNdWlSRWdtZz09)

[pwd=SHVsbEpnL3gvWHJ4NGZNdWlSRWdtZz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85354104721?pwd=SHVsbEpnL3gvWHJ4NGZNdWlSRWdtZz09)

Meeting ID: 853 5410 4721 Passcode: 054786

As of 11/20: **Ella's Centering Prayer group by Zoom** will be at the usual time (Fridays 9:30-10:30a.m.) and also on Tuesdays at 12noon. It will always be this same link:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/221895142?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/221895142?pwd=SnROcjF3My95NC9Qc3hVS1VUZzljZz09)

[pwd=SnROcjF3My95NC9Qc3hVS1VUZzljZz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/221895142?pwd=SnROcjF3My95NC9Qc3hVS1VUZzljZz09)

RURAL FOOD PROGRAM UPDATE November 2020

On Tuesday, 11/10 Rural Food volunteers distributed food to 68 families totaling 159 people, including 27 seniors and 40 children. As the weather turned very cold, our clients, with wide smiles of appreciation, accepted donated blankets, sleeping bags and quilts for each member of their family. Thank you to all who so generously donated to make this goal a reality.

Next month we plan to decorate for the holidays and distribute festive Union Hotel cookies, candy canes and warm socks.

This program is funded through the Rural Food Collection each month, private donations and awesome volunteers. **Thank you for your generous donations as we strive to meet the nutritional needs of all attendees at our food distributions.**

RURAL FOOD VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES in Hall
Sat., December 5, 9-10:00am: repackaging
Mon., December 7, 10:00am -12:00pm: set up
Tues., December 8, 8:30 -11:00am: food distribution

PASTOR SPEAKS...

Following the Memo from Bishop Vasa (Bulletin #77) dated October 28, 2020, the counties of the Diocese now fall into the tiers noted below:

Humboldt County - Tier 4 (3 weeks) - Open indoors with a maximum of 50% capacity. Has one week of higher numbers which puts Humboldt at risk to drop to Tier 3.

Del Norte County -Tier 3 (8 weeks) - Open indoors with 50% capacity or 200, whichever is fewer. Has one week of lower numbers which holds out hope for Del Norte County to rise to Tier 4.

Napa County - Tier 3 (1 week) - Open indoors with 50% capacity or 200, whichever is fewer. Has one week of higher numbers which puts Napa at risk to drop to Tier 2).

Lake County - Tier 2 (8 weeks) - Open indoors with 25% capacity or 100, whichever is fewer.

Mendocino County - Tier 2 (NEW) (Congratulations!) Open indoors with 25% capacity or 100, whichever is fewer.

Sonoma County - Tier 1 (8 weeks) - Outdoor only with masks and social distance

There is no hope of great changes in the COVID environment at any time in the near future. Appeals are being made to the County and State to allow Churches to be upgraded one Tier. But for our bishop the prospect of actually receiving such a modification remains a very remote possibility and not very probable. Those of you who claim that the Church is not doing anything to push or oppose what you might feel are unjust restrictions on the Church, please understand that the Bishops are in regular contact with the State Health Officer and the Governor's Office regarding these matters.

Father Bala

UNWRINKLED 

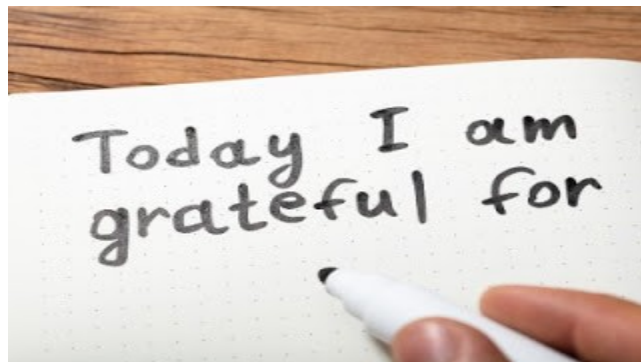
To keep the heart unwrinkled, to be hopeful, kindly, cheerful, reverent—that is the triumph over old age.

—Thomas Bailey Aldrich

A CONCORD PASTOR COMMENTS

ON SPIRITUALITY, WORSHIP AND PRAYER IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC TRADITION

[Pause for Prayer: Thursday, 11/26](#)



[Image source](#)

Today, Lord, I'm grateful for the gift of faith: that strength, power and source within showing me the way, guiding me in the dark, making sure my faltering step, giving light for finding truth and hope for living gracefully through trials and troubled times...

Today I'm grateful, Lord, for the gift of your Church: that wounded, rag-tag, joyful company of saints and sinners whose faith is my strength, binding us all together, brothers and sisters in you and in your love...

Today I'm grateful for all the people around me and those behind me and before me: the ones who've helped to make me the person I've become; those who've loved me in ways too many to know or to imagine; those who've loved me when I've failed to love them in return; those who've pardoned and forgiven me with mercy and with grace; those who've shared their joy with me, who fill my heart with peace and who help me trust and know with hope that you are ever by my side...

And today I'm grateful for all the people I have yet to meet but will...

Today, Lord, I'm grateful for the mystery of your presence: in everyone I know and meet; in the simplest and most ordinary moments of each day;

and in the stillness, in the quiet
of the time I spend with you in prayer...

And today, Lord, I'm grateful for...
*Take some time to tell the Lord
what YOU are most grateful for today.*

Today I praise and thank you, Lord,
for you are my God
from whom all blessings flow...

Amen.

Concord Pastor recommended blogs:

<https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/>

<https://johnpmcginty.wordpress.com/>

Deacon-structing the Voice of Illness, Part 1

By Deacon Pedro

Monday, November 23, 2020

As we prepare once again for the season of Advent, I remember a few years ago on [Perspectives: The Weekly Edition](#), I was speaking about the Festival of Lights – Hanukkah – with Rabbi Aaron Flanzraich, and he said that it's no coincidence that Hanukkah begins on the day of the year that has the least amount of light: It's a celebration of light in the midst of the darkness. That reminds me, too, of that beautiful passage from Isaiah 9:2 that we hear at the Christmas Vigil Mass, *"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light"*, and that it is very often in darkness that we notice the light.

This is also part of what we celebrate at Advent and Christmas, and it's no coincidence that Advent and Christmas also take place at a time of year when there is more darkness than light.

I think it's right to say that this year has been one that has had its fair share of darkness. Even though we've survived this ["COVID Spring"](#) by calling it a spring and by looking at all the signs of hope and light, for many people it has been a time of illness, unemployment, financial struggles, and loss.

For many, it will be during this Christmas, when we're supposed to get together with family, that the darkness will really hit home. Yet, in a strange kind of way, that pain can actually help us journey through Advent; it can help us in our spiritual journey.

COVID or not, there is a lot of pain in the world. Most often, it is not physical pain. I have heard this type of pain referred to by other deacons, as "the voice of illness".

According to Deacon Robert Suthers, the voice of illness is the "voice" that exists inside all of us that asks, "Where is God?" It is not specific to physical illness or disease. In many ways, it could also be called the "voice of brokenness" or the "voice of woundedness". It is in our brokenness and woundedness that,

deep down inside, all of us cry out in search for meaning and compassion.

I am reminded of a saying that I first heard from the [L'Arche Communities](#), that everyone who has been hurt has a right to be sure that they are loved – and all of us have experienced hurt, so it applies to all of us. In my opinion, this is the best explanation of the voice of illness. It is that voice that cries out for love – to know that there is meaning to our existence, to our suffering and seeks to know with certainty that we are valued. For Christians it's obvious that all these questions can be answered by asking, "Where is God?" even if those who are suffering have no awareness or knowledge of God.

In our second year of formation for the permanent diaconate, we explored what it was like to work with ex-offenders and with those who have hurt children. At that time, I recognized that the work cannot be done outside of God's grace and mercy. I recognized that perpetrators of horrible offenses are really just clamouring for help – clamouring to be loved and to be accepted, much the same way that lepers were in the time of Jesus. The voice of illness could also be called the voice of suffering. In truth, we are all suffering at some level. We all have our own wounds that need to be tended. At some point, to various degrees, we all cry out, "Where is God?" We all seek to be loved and accepted.

Next Sunday, we will hear Jesus telling us to not fall asleep during the night. In times of darkness, let us also not lose hope – the dawn is approaching. Together with the Prophet Isaiah, let's cry for the Heavens to be opened and for the Lord to come down (Isaiah 63:16B-17, 19B; 64:2-7). Let us turn to the Lord, that we will see his face and be saved (Psalm 80).

As we move through this week towards the First Sunday of Advent and then towards the Solemnity of the Birth of the Messiah and on to the Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord, let me share with you a series of reflections on suffering and what we call the "voice of illness". May it help you see the darkness and those around you in a different light. May it help you to see opportunities when you encounter people in pain this Advent season. May it help you journey with your own darkness, brokenness, and pain. This is where I begin my reflection and where, I am beginning to learn, I must always begin any ministry or diaconal work: from the place of my own woundedness and my own crying out, "Where is God?"

As always, [write to me](#) to share your thoughts and stories. I love to hear from you.



Every week, Deacon Pedro takes a particular topic apart, not so much to explore or explain the subject to its fullness, but rather to provide insights that will deepen our understanding of the subject. And don't worry, at the end of the day he always puts the pieces back together. There are no limits to deconstructing: Write to him and ask any questions about the faith or Church teaching: pedro@saltandlighttv.org

Virtual Advent Retreat: Fr. Christopher LaRocca has graciously offered to hold an Advent Retreat on Tuesday evenings [6:30pm] December 1, 8, 15, and 22 via Zoom. Our Zoom retreat info is posted online at www.stphilipstteresa.org [All are welcome.]