

# First Sunday of Advent

## 3rd December 2023



*Stay awake, because you do not know  
when the master of the house is coming.*

*Mark 13*



What does it mean to stay awake? It means to always be ready for anything that may come to us. However, does this mean that when we are ready we would be able to handle whatever that may come to us?

This Sunday is the first Sunday of Advent—advent means arrival or coming of somebody who is important and this is none other than Jesus. We therefore have to be prepared for his coming by building and strengthening our relationship with him. We have to steer away from anything that would make us drift away from the teachings of Jesus, we have to listen more to Jesus than to this world.

This world, seemingly, dictates to us that we have to be materially prepared for the coming celebrations from television adverts to high street stores stacked to the rafters. This Advent provides us with the ideal opportunity to prepare spiritually for what may come. Many of us have strengthened our faith as this year has unfolded, asking for Jesus' support more than before. This Advent, as we prepare for what will surely be an unusual festive season, let us ponder what good will it do us if we are materially prepared yet spiritually unprepared?

### **This week let us pray for:**

- ♦ strength and support for all those facing difficulties ;
- ♦ all those who are feeling isolated;
- ♦ our preparations for the coming of Christ;
- ♦ all those connected to our community who are unwell, upset or mourning.



This week, the Church asks us to offer our prayers to refugees and migrants who are risking what little they have to seek safety and security in their lives.

*Lord, no one is a stranger to you and no one is ever far from your loving care. In your kindness watch over refugees and exiles, those separated from their loved ones, young people who are lost and those who have left or run away from home.*

*Bring them back safely to the place where they long to be and help us always to show your kindness to strangers and those in need. Amen*

### **God of hope**

**be with us in our Advent journey  
to the stable and beyond,  
be with us in our meeting  
and in our travelling together,  
be with us in our worship  
and our praying together,  
be with us in our Advent journey  
to the stable and beyond,  
our God of hope. Amen**

### **Thursday 30th November—Feast of St Andrew**

Loving God,

We think of Andrew, called first among your disciples,  
Leaving his nets to follow Jesus, leaving his life behind to answer Your call,  
We thank You for Andrew, an example to all who follow You  
Trusting blindly in Your promise, trusting in a better life with You.

You have sent us Andrew the apostle, inspired by Your Spirit to spread Your news, let us find his courage to follow You, let us find his passion to be Your witness, let us be Your disciples. Amen

***“Advent is a journey  
towards Bethlehem.  
May we let ourselves  
be drawn by the light  
of God made man.”***

**Pope Francis**