

## 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday Advent (C)

- Advent is the time of dreams, the time of hope, the time of longing
- What sort of dreams you have for yourself, your family, your world...
- I don't mean the dreams you have while you're asleep...
- I mean the dreams you have when you are awake...the dreams you have when you are doing something repetitious like washing the clothes or dishes, or riding in a bus or perhaps a task at work...the dreams you have when you're watching your baby sleep or children play...or when you're going for a walk or gardening or fishing...
- You know, those times when your eyes sort of go out of focus and your mind and imagination go off in their own direction...a bit like during homily time at Mass!
- Anyway what do you dream of when you dream? What are the hopes that arise? [students finishing school...couples just getting married...coming to retirement...dreams for future...]
- Our dreams tend to be of how we'd like our lives and our family and our society and the world and the future to be, aren't they.
- These dreams are very personal...they are our own...but dreams can be shared, and one of the most beautiful things in life is for husband and wife to share their dreams, to create a dream together, and to work together to achieve that dream.
- One of the most famous speeches of history is that of civil rights activist Martin Luther King Jnr in 1963, and in part of that speech he said... "*I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed. We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal.*
- *I have a dream that one day ... the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood. I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, ..., will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today."*
- What a wonderful dream!...and the thing is that unless we dream, we will have nothing to work for, we will have nothing to work towards, we will have no hopes - & that's the point - hope - not mere optimism that wishes that things become what we dream as we passively await, but hope in a way that actively promotes the dreams that I have - fashioning things as I work towards their fulfillment.
- We are still working on King's dream, but nothing would have happened without this dream being shared.
- Such dreams are important for us in our human life, because we can find God and God's ways in our dreams.
- God continues to create, to work, to be active in our world and in our lives.

- In our dreaming we can envision a better life, a better world, and a better life and better world is what God dreams for us.
- God is in our dreaming, and we are in God's dreaming & God shines a light on those dreams of ours that are consistent with what God dreams for us.
- In our 1st reading today the prophet Jeremiah dreamed of and hoped for the wonderful days to come when all God has promised will come to be...when the Saviour comes to bring honesty and integrity.
- In the 2nd reading Paul speaks of the dream and hopes he has for the people in Thessalonica, that they be people of love for each other, that they be blameless and holy in God's sight, that they follow the ways of Jesus.
- And in the Gospel Jesus dreams of the great day of liberation...a wonderful day...but we must be ready.
- God has dreams for us as well, that are in accord with the best of dreams we have for ourselves.
- God wants for us what is the best for us and when we share our dreams & work towards them together, wonderfully powerful things can happen.
- Unfortunately we can be short-sighted, narrow-minded and self-centred and these tendencies murder dreams.
- Advent is the season of hope because it signifies that the dark time will come to an end.
- Hatred, racism, abuse of all forms, broken relationships, indifference to human suffering, these are part of the dark times of the world.
- These abominations to God's love must end, and we as Church and as individuals in the Church must work towards their downfall.
- The transformation of the world from hatred to love is the continual work of who call themselves Christian.
- The season of Advent reminds us of the work we must do all year—our work, even if we are living through our own dark times, is to shine the light of love into the darkness others are facing.
- Advent is the time of hoping for light to come into the darkness.
- We cannot allow past hurts and present prejudices to destroy our opportunity to bring light to those in darkness.
- Advent is a time to prepare for the coming of God into our world as a human person to enable our dreams to have genuine hope.
- Generally we understand this to be his coming on the Last Day and his coming at Christmas, which recalls his historical birth over 2000 years ago.
- Luke reminds us of another coming which we tend to forget, namely, his daily coming in the ordinary events and people in our lives.
- Luke's emphasis is that we should be vigilant to recognise and welcome Jesus who comes to us without warning everyday in people, places and events we least expect. If we are preparing for the Lord's coming by looking up to the sky, Luke today invites us to look out, to look into the story of our daily lives and recognise the Lord who comes to us in ways we least expect.