**FOR THE WEEKEND OF NOVEMBER 30 – DECEMBER 1, 2024**

First Sunday in Advent

**Gospel reading**

Luke 21: 25-28, 34-36

Jesus said to his disciples:

“There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on earth nations will be in dismay, perplexed by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will die of fright in anticipation of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. But when these signs begin to happen, stand erect and raise your heads because your redemption is at hand.

Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy from carousing and drunkenness and the anxieties of daily life, and that day catch you by surprise like a trap. For that day will assault everyone who lives on the face of the earth. Be vigilant at all times and pray that you have the strength to escape the tribulations that are imminent and to stand before the Son of Man.”

**Intercession**

As we prepare for the birth of our savior this Advent, may we take time to share our many gifts with others, including the *Catholic Ministry Appeal*.

**Copy for bulletin announcement**

We long for a closeness with God. And Advent is the perfect time to journey toward this intimacy with the Lord. After all, it is the season when our heavenly Father demonstrates His deep love for us – by preparing us to receive the gift of His Son. It doesn’t get more personal than that!

But sometimes our anxieties and the trappings of this world can take root in us, preoccupy our thoughts and attentions and keep us from entering fully into a relationship with God. Earthly concerns – completing year-end projects at work, ticking off items on our Christmas shopping list, planning the big family celebration – distract us from what God most desires of us – communion with Him.

In today’s Gospel, Jesus reminds us to “be vigilant at all times.” He warns us to “beware that your hearts do not become drowsy from…drunkenness and the anxieties of daily life.” Let us take to heart Christ’s message so that we can enter fully into this “watchful and waiting” season. Let us “wake up” to the many ways we can keep Jesus’ teachings front and center in our lives: time with the scriptures, volunteering at a homeless shelter, inviting an elderly neighbor to dinner, bookending the day with prayer, donating to charity, and giving to the *Catholic Ministry Appeal*.

Yes, Advent is a season of preparation and patience, but it is also a season of promise. It is a time when, through prayer and sacrifice, we remember the true meaning of Christmas – how Christ’s birth in a lowly manger over 2000 years ago was the cause of our salvation.

We thank you in advance for your generosity, for heeding Christ’s call to love your neighbors through the sharing of your blessings. May the peace of Christ be with you this Advent season.

**Copy for pulpit announcement**

The giving of presents is central to this season. God has blessed us with so many gifts, the greatest being his Son, Jesus Christ. But Christ’s birth is only the beginning of our Father’s tremendous gift to us; Christ will come again. Just as we prepare for Jesus’ birth this Advent season, today’s Gospel reminds us to look with anticipation to the day when the Son of Man returns “with great power and glory” to reunite the faithful with their heavenly Father. How do we prepare for this coming? Through prayer and sacrifice. Christ came into this world to serve, not be served. When we emulate Christ through service – be it the sharing of our time and talents or our treasure – we demonstrate our gratitude to the Giver of all gifts. May we honor our Lord by sharing our many gifts with those in need this Advent through support of the *Catholic Ministry Appeal*.

**Social media post/content**

Photo: A person deep in prayer

Text: *“Be vigilant and pray”* – Luke 21:36

Copy: When you prayerfully consider giving to our parish *Catholic Ministry Appeal*, you open yourself up to the many gifts God has for you. “Give and gifts will be given to you.” (Luke 6:38).