

First Sunday of Advent 2021

THE JOURNEY ONWARDS ...

May the Lord be generous in increasing your love...

Stay awake ...



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FROM THE READINGS

**‘I will make a virtuous Branch grow for David,
who shall practise honesty and integrity in the land.
... the city will be called: The Lord-our-integrity.’** *Jeremiah 33:15-16*

**May the Lord be generous in increasing your love
and make you love one another and the whole human race
as much as we love you.** *1 Thessalonians 3:12*

Lord, make me know your ways. Lord teach me your paths. *Psalm 24(25):4*

**Stay awake, praying at all times for the strength to survive all that is
going to happen, and to stand with confidence before the Son of Man.’**
Luke 21:36

THE JOURNEY

After COVID-19 virus lockdowns, many of us yearn to journey again, to enjoy the wonder of the world around us and its people, to hold and hug loved ones, to feel the excitement of moving onwards towards new destinations, new experiences and adventures.

For some, being isolated, with fewer distractions, has brought a ‘journey within’ and personal discoveries: Precious relationships have been disrupted. Lives once securely ‘on track’ have been shaken with financial pressures. We have managed with less. We’ve learned new ways to connect with others. There is peace and tranquillity for some, with new appreciation of local neighbourhoods. For others, loneliness. We journey onwards, but we are changed. There is a sense of urgency in the readings for the First Sunday of Advent 2021: Stay awake! Pray! Walk God’s way, for we do not know what is ahead!

FROM FELLOW TRAVELLERS

MY PERSONAL MISSION

God has created me to do Him some definite service.
He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another.
I have my mission. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next.
I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons.
He has not created me for naught. I shall do good; I shall do His work.
I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my own place,
while not intending it if I do but keep His commandments.
Therefore, I will trust Him, whatever I am, I can never be thrown away.
If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him,
in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him.
If I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve Him.
He does nothing in vain. He knows what He is about.
He may take away my friends. He may throw me among strangers.
He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sink, hide my future from me.
Still, He knows what He is about. *Saint John Henry Newman*

TO SEE A LITTLE



I used to pray:
God, teach me your ways.
Now I pray:
God, that I may see a little.

This is because I came to understand that
God is teaching me different ways all the time
– but I don't see them.

There are miracles of God's works and signs
of God's ways all around me and in me.
I have to learn to focus properly or, perhaps,
to look in the right direction.
I only really have to see a little. *Edwina Gately*

FOR THINKING AND PRAYING

- What words or phrases stand out for you in these readings and insights of 'a fellow traveller'?
- What insights might you take with you on your own journey?

A PRAYER

This is the season of His coming;
night is far gone, the day is at hand.

It is time to wake from sleep;
for the Son of Man comes at an hour
we do not expect.

His coming is the advent of saving love.

Come, Lord Jesus.

His coming is good news for the poor,
freedom for captives, sight for the blind,
liberty for the oppressed,
and acceptance for the unacceptable.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Then shall the lame leap like the hart,
and the tongue of the dumb sing for joy.

Come, O come, Emmanuel. *Bruce Prewer*



Prepared for Advent and Christmas Year C 2021 by: Adult Faith Education Sandhurst, PO Box 201 Bendigo, Vic, 3552 Email: adultfaith@sandhurst.catholic.org.au

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