

A Day by Day Spiritual Journey Through Advent  
With Deacon Chris

First Sunday of Advent.

**Light a candle and make sure it is safe and don't leave unattended.**

Its Meaning.

The Latin scholars amongst us will know that advent is taken from *adventus* which means coming. I hadn't realised that the Feast of St. Andrew dictates when Advent starts. It is without doubt the shortest of seasons.

At one time this wasn't the case. Advent was forty days long, starting on November 15<sup>th</sup> and had the title *Martinmas or St. Martin's Lent'*. This was due to the feast of St. Martin being on 11<sup>th</sup> November. Before the calculators come out and say that it is more than forty days to Christmas we have to take it through to the Epiphany which is even further. Many centuries ago the Epiphany was celebrated rather than Christmas.

Advent is a time of preparation and celebration for God's plan of salvation. We do tend to look on Advent as preparation for Christmas and if we use it properly we get the true sense of Christmas.

I wonder if there is a tendency to forget that we are preparing for Christ's second coming. It may be hard to connect the two events. Without his passion, death and resurrection his birth has no significance. We look back on it in the light of the resurrection.

There is a lovely little phrase that sums Advent up 'the already and the not yet.'

Advent is a spiritual journey. We are not asked to fast or give up anything like we are in Lent. The readings in the first week give us a view of the already and the not yet. Isaiah is preparing the way and our Lord is also preparing the way.

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**In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen**

We come before you, O God, who, by his own power, created heaven and earth and all that dwells therein. We praise you for the great gift of your Son, who came to renew your covenant with our fallen race. We ask for the grace that will help us prepare for His Second Coming and to celebrate His first. Through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

**Gospel:** St. Luke's Gospel Chapter 21 verses 25 to 28 and 34 to 36

Stay Awake.

**Reflection:** What do we think when we hear about the armed conflict that is taking place in the Middle East and the Ukraine and then read a gospel like this? Do we think that the end is nigh?

As a Houghton Weavers song goes: '*The cares of tomorrow must wait until this day is done.*'

It is a balance between not giving two hoots and worrying over every little thing. We have to trust in God knowing that he wants us to try and promote and maintain peace.

**Your Own Time.**

**Rosary**

When you are ready pray a decade of the rosary that is dedicated to your own intention.

**Concluding Prayer.**

Strengthened by your Holy Word may we go forward with hope as we prepare ourselves for the celebration of his birth and his second coming. Through Christ our Lord.

**The Lord bless us, and keep us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.**