

# ST. THOMAS INDIAN MISSION

**First Sunday of  
Advent, Year B  
November 29, 2020**

**Fort Yuma, California | P. O. Box 1176, Winterhaven, CA 92283**

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**Fr. George "of the desert" Decasa  
Pastor**

**For the time being, our Sunday Masses are held outdoors, by the Parish Hall, on Saturdays at 4:30 PM and on Sundays at 9:30 AM. Please come in a face mask and observe social distancing (6 ft. between people of different households).**

## **1st Reading:**

**Isaiah 63:16b-17, 19b; 64:2-7**

You, LORD, are our father, our redeemer you are named forever. Why do you let us wander, O LORD, from your ways, and harden our hearts so that we fear you not? Return for the sake of your servants, the tribes of your heritage. Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down, with the mountains quaking before you, while you wrought awesome deeds we could not hope for, such as they had not heard of from of old. No ear has ever heard, no eye ever seen, any God but you doing such deeds for those who wait for him. Would that you might meet us doing right, that we were mindful of you in our ways! Behold, you are angry, and we are sinful; all of us have become like unclean people, all our good deeds are like polluted rags; we have all withered like leaves, and our guilt carries us away like the wind. There is none who calls upon your name, who rouses himself to cling to you; for you have hidden your face from us and have delivered us up to our guilt. Yet, O LORD, you are our father; we are the clay and you the potter: we are all the work of your hands.

*The Word of the Lord.*

## **Responsorial Psalm:**

**Response: Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.**

O shepherd of Israel, hearken, from your throne upon the cherubim, shine forth. Rouse your power, and come to save us.

**R.**

Once again, O LORD of hosts, look down from heaven, and see; take care of this vine, and protect what your right hand has planted the son of man whom you yourself made strong.

**R.**

May your help be with the man of your right hand, with the son of man whom you yourself made strong. Then we will no more withdraw from you; give us new life, and we will call upon your name. **R.**

## **2nd Reading:**

**1 Corinthians 1:3-9**

Brothers and sisters: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my God always on your account for the grace of God bestowed on you in Christ Jesus, that in him you were enriched in every way, with all discourse

and all knowledge, as the testimony to Christ was confirmed among you, so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will keep you firm to the end, irreproachable on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, and by him you were called to fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. *The Word of the Lord.*

## **R. Alleluia, alleluia.**

Show us, Lord, your love, and grant us your salvation.

## **R. Alleluia, alleluia.**

## **Gospel: Mark 13:33-37**

Jesus said to his disciples: "Be watchful! Be alert! You do not know when the time will come. It is like a man traveling abroad. He leaves home and places his servants in charge, each with his own work, and orders the gatekeeper to be on the watch. Watch, therefore; you do not know when the Lord of the house is coming, whether in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning. May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to all: 'Watch!'" *The Gospel of the Lord.*



**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday  
of  
Advent**

**ADVENT IS A TIME FOR  
REPENTANCE AND  
NEW BEGINNINGS.**

*It does call us to  
prepare for the  
(second) coming  
of the Lord.*

**THIS SHOULD PROMPT  
US TO ASK HOW  
READY WE ARE IF HE  
COMES DURING THIS  
SEASON OF LONGING  
FOR HIS RETURN IN  
GLORY.**



## **Acclamation:**

When we eat this Bread,  
and drink this Cup,  
we proclaim your Death,  
O Lord, until you come  
again.

## REFLECTING ON THE WORD . . . . GUIDEPOSTS

### HAPPY NEW CHRISTIAN YEAR!

With the first Sunday of Advent we begin a new liturgical year. By “liturgical year” or “church year” we mean the cycle of feasts and seasons celebrated by the Christian community in the course of one year which consists of the longing and preparation for the Savior’s coming (Advent), his birth or incarnation (Christmas), his public life, death and resurrection (Lent and Easter), and our growth into his life in our daily life as individuals and as a community (Ordinary Time). Such is the liturgical life of the Universal Christian Church, a whole year of existential following of our Lord. It appropriately begins on the First Sunday of Advent with the theme of the second coming of the Lord or *Parousia*, and ends with the solemnity of Christ the King. That was the solemnity we celebrated last Sunday which made us ask ourselves if indeed Jesus had been King of our life all along. Thus, in light of that, Advent becomes a time for repentance and new beginnings.

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So we are entering the season of Advent. The term “advent” comes from the Latin word *adventus*, which means arrival or coming, and the genuine response to it is preparation, waiting, longing. Actually, the season of Advent invites us to be aware of Christ’s triple coming and to integrate their lessons in our lives.

The four-week season of Advent which begins today commemorates the threefold coming of the Lord: first, his coming in the past, when he took on our human nature which we celebrate at Christmas; second, his coming in the present, in the Church – in his word, in the sacraments, in prayer, and in other people, especially the poor; and finally, his coming in the future, at his *Parousia* or the Last Day. All three readings in the season of Advent revolve around the same theme.

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The early Christians captured the theology of the Lord’s coming with the Aramaic word “Maranatha.” How the word is divided brings out a different meaning. When read as “Maran-atha,” it means “The Lord has come,” and refers to Jesus’ first, historical and humble coming, two thousand years ago. When divided as “Marana-tha,” it means “Our Lord, come!” referring to Christ’s second, trans historical, glorious coming, technically called “Parousia.” Our Christian life/existence is lived out between these two comings of Jesus Christ.

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The theme of Advent as a time to prepare for Christmas begins only next week, the second Sunday of Advent. Today’s theme of *parousia* reminds us that essentially we are preparing and waiting not for something but for someone – the LORD. If we remember that we wait for the LORD, our Advent preparation for Christmas becomes a model for our ongoing preparation for Christ’s return, when we shall see Him face to face, thus, making us watchful of His coming!

### HOW TO WAIT FOR THE LORD’S RETURN?

Today’s readings remind us that waiting for the Lord is not a passive exercise. Isaiah prays that God “might meet us doing right,” rejecting our sinful ways. Jesus warns his disciples that they must keep watch, because, like servants not knowing when the Lord of the house will return, we don’t want to be asleep when we should be ready to receive him. Paul assures the Corinthians that they “are not lacking in any spiritual gift” as they wait.

Let the word of God inspire us to prepare our hearts for his arrival.

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Today’s gospel underlines the need for “vigilance” or “watchfulness.” The parable of the absent householder emphasizes that, existentially, to be “watchful” means to wait on others..

Before leaving home, the householder places his servants in charge, assigning each specific tasks. Fidelity in the performance of their duties prepares them for the householder’s anticipated but still unknown time of return. Ignorant of the householder’s schedule, including the time of day or night, all of these servants must perform their duties with the utmost attention since their task is to execute the master’s will. Falling asleep captures the lack of diligence they must avoid. To wait on others is to await the return of the householder.

This theme applies to us, Christians of today. Thus, among many examples: Husbands and wives who wait on each other in developing their mutual love are awaiting the Lord. Those who are single who look to the needs of family and others are expecting the arrival of the Lord. Employers who provide for the total welfare of their employees are anticipating the Lord’s return. All leaders who promote the common good, not their personal fancies, look forward to the *parousia*. All who are intent on serving — the parish, the community, etc. - affirm that to wait on others is to await the return.

### PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

#### Celebrant:

Let us bring to God our intentions for our world, our neighbors, and ourselves, praying:

**All: *Be born in us; be born in our world.***

#### Lector:

1.) That we be watchful for the Lord’s coming, and be alert to the many ways in which he comes to us, ***we pray:***

2.) For all who are entrusted with positions of leadership, that they may govern with wisdom, prudence, and compassion, ***we pray:***

- 3.) For the sick and their families, friends, and caregivers, that they know God's healing, *we pray:*
- 4.) That Advent be a time of true repentance lest with hearts hardened by self-interest and minds dulled with cynicism we miss the real coming of Christ, *we pray:*
- 5.) That in our preparations for Christmas we make practical plans to bring peace to troubled hearts, hope to the despairing, and love to the un-loved, *we pray:*

**Celebrant:**

Loving Father, be with us in this season of repentance that we may do our part in preparing the way of the Lord. Amen.

**LATEST REMINDERS FROM THE DIOCESE IN THESE DAYS OF COVID-19 PROTOCOLS:**

- Masses remain outdoors. (Because of the recent rise in Covid-19 cases also in San Diego county, churches there have been told to return to outdoor Masses).
- Advent Penance Services are suspended for this year due to COVID-19.
- Holy Communion can be brought to the home of one who is sick/homebound only by a practicing Catholic who is living in the same household.
- Holy Communion may not be brought to assisted care facilities, nursing homes, retirement homes, or similar places by Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist who minister to several unrelated persons.
- However, individual family members may bring Holy Communion to their relative living in an assisted care facility or similar place as long as they are visiting only their relative.

**GENERAL CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION ON THE SUNDAYS OF ADVENT.**

Since the 2020 Advent Penance Services have been suspended and some may have the desire or the need for a Sacramental Confession, Bishop McElroy has given permission, at the discretion of the pastor, to administer the Rite for Reconciliation of Several Penitents with General Confession and Absolution during Mass on the Sundays of Advent.

Dear parishioners, in line with the foregoing directive, I will administer the general confession and absolution at our Advent Sunday Masses, that is, starting on November 28-29 — the First Sunday of Advent. It will take the place of the usual Penitential Act.

**TO WAIT ON OTHERS IS TO AWAIT THE RETURN OF THE LORD**

All Souls Day Novena --- \$ 900.00 | Help for the Missions --- \$ 1,078.00

**Our Post-Pandemic Schedule:**

Please don't forget that, God willing, when the threat of Covid-19 is gone, when we will be given the go-ahead to use our Church as before, the Schedule that we will immediately follow will be as follows:

**Sunday Masses (We follow Arizona Time):**

Saturday 4:30 PM | Sunday 9:30 AM

**Holy Hour/Private Adoration before the Exposed Blessed Sacrament:**

Saturday 3:15 pm to 4:15 pm | Sunday 8:15 am to 9:15 am

**Confessions:**

Saturday 3:45 pm to 4:15 pm | Sunday 8:45 am to 9:15 am

**For Catechism, Baptism & Marriage Requirements, please visit our website.**

**Note:** Our Church is CLOSED on weekdays. Tourists and sightseers may visit our Church when it is open on Saturday afternoons and/or Sunday mornings, as long as they observe proper visiting manners.

**LECTORS AND MINISTERS OF COMMUNION**

To be assigned as Lector and/or Minister of Holy Communion, one must be a practicing Catholic, that is to say, among other things, that the person is living a life in good standing with the Catholic Church, regularly attends Sunday Mass, and is able to receive Holy Communion.

Moreover, because of the COVID-19 threat, Ministers of Communion must be below 65 years of age and healthy.

There is no age limit for Lectors as long as they are healthy and physically able and can approach the ambo without any need of physical assistance.

**Each Lector** is expected to come to Mass prepared, that is, to have read all the readings prior and meditated on them.

As much as possible we assign three lectors for each Mass so that in the event that not all three are present, the one present is prepared to cover for the others. If all three are present,

**Lector 1** proclaims the first reading and resp. psalm;

**Lector 2** proclaims the second reading and alleluia;

**Lector 3** leads the Prayers of the Faithful.

**The two Ministers of Communion's** spiritual preparation is their personal encounter with the Risen Lord at the Holy Hour immediately preceding the Mass. One of them will expose the Blessed Sacrament at the beginning of the Holy Hour and the other will repose it at the end of the Holy Hour.



**To those with parish contribution envelopes:** to facilitate counting and posting of your Sunday contribution: 1) please use your official parish contribution envelope; 2) if you are sending a contribution which is good for some weeks or months, please don't send their corresponding weekly envelopes but send just one contribution envelope with the total amount in it. **ALL FOR THE GREATER HONOR AND GLORY OF GOD.**

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