

Reflection on the Gospel-1st Sunday of Advent Year A
(Matthew 24:37-44)

-Veronica Lawson RSM

“Where is the Life we have lost in living?” asks the Chorus in T. S. Eliot's *The Rock*. The Jesus of Matthew's gospel is implicitly asking much the same question as Eliot's Chorus. He is making much the same observation as Henry David Thoreau, “Most [people] lead lives of quiet desperation and go to the grave with the song still in them.” We are invited to find Life in our living and to sing the songs that are in us. We are to be agents of our own future rather than unthinking participants in the inevitable round of daily activities that have preoccupied humans from time immemorial.

As we begin a new liturgical year, Matthew's Jesus invites us to contemplate the ultimate realities even as we attend to the demands of the present. He tells us to be “awake”, to be “ready” all the time, not because death or the end of the world are around the corner, but because we need to recognise the multiple “advents” or arrivals of the Christ, the Human One, who calls us beyond self-absorption to Life. He reminds us that we are no different from our forebears who from earliest days have gone about their daily business without being sufficiently attentive to what really matters.

In our times, we have allowed thieves to break in and plunder our planet, our common home, because thieves come in guises that we fail to recognise. They so often look just like us and do the things we do. It may be that we must first be attentive to our own ways of plundering the house that is home to all of God's creatures.

We spend much of our time looking back. That has its place, since our history informs our present and helps us in shaping our future, though all the while we know with Auden that ‘[t]he past is foreign country: they do things differently there’. Advent invites us to look forward rather than back and to dream gospel-inspired dreams that will enable creative change in our own lives and in the life of our planet. It invites us to be awake, to be ready for any eventuality.

Dreams and visions have always been the precursors to effective and life-giving change. We need the grace to see visions and to dream dreams that make for justice and peace and that permit us to walk more freely in the light of God's ways. We seek the grace to “see” God's word as did the prophet Isaiah in the first reading (Isa 2:1-5). We need to put our energy into creating life-generating systems that enable us to move forward in the paths of gospel compassion and love.

BULLETIN FOR FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR A



ST ALIPIUS PARISH, BALLARAT EAST

Including St Peter & Paul's, Buninyong

Parish Address: 84 Victoria Street, Ballarat East. 3350

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MASS TIMETABLE FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING
MONDAY, 28th NOVEMBER 2016

MONDAY:	No Mass
TUESDAY:	No Mass
WEDNESDAY:	11.00 am in Mercy Centre
THURSDAY:	9.30 am in Parish Church
FRIDAY:	9.30 am in Parish Church
SATURDAY:	No Sacrament of Reconciliation

NEXT WEEKEND'S MASSES

ST. ALIPIUS	SAT	6.00 PM
	SUN	9.00 AM
BUNINYONG	SUN	10.30 AM

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR A

READINGS -	First:	Isaiah 11:1-10
	Second:	Romans 15:4-9
	Gospel:	Matthew 3:1-12

RECENT DEATH: Noel Shannon, Andrew Cartledge.

ANNIVERSARIES: Anne Veronica Duck, Tracey Howard, Manuel & Nora Herrera.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK: Nell McGettigan, Pamela Hayes, Nathan Cambell, Denise Learmonth, Cath Wheelahan, Barbara Keirl, Mick Kent, Terry McGarry, Kevin Walsh, Peter McDonald (Ocean Grove), Peter Clohesy, Kaye Tuddenham, Frank Nolan (Buninyong), Elvie May Laffey.

COUNTING TEAMS:

This Week: **Team 6:** M. Stewart ©, M. Anderson, R. Reynolds

Next Week: **Team 7:** K. Cummins ©, J. O’Meara, B. Hood, G. Duck



COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:

PARISH:	Envelopes:	\$ 1,393.50
	Loose money:	\$ 300.00
	Credit cards:	\$ 3,739.00
	Direct debits:	\$ <u>570.00</u>
		\$ 6,002.50
PRESBYTERY:		\$ 702.00

ANOINTING MASS

Will be held on Tuesday, 6th December at 2.00 pm in St Alipius Church. Following Mass afternoon tea will be served in the Hall. A plate would be appreciated. Anyone who needs transport is asked to contact any member of the Caring Group.

MAKING A SCENE AT CHRISTMAS

A display of Christmas Nativity scenes will be held in St Patrick’s Hall, from Wednesday, 14th December—Sunday 18th December. On display there will be in excess over 300 nativities from over 40 countries. Opening hours are Wednesday 6.00 pm—8.00 pm, Thursday and Friday 10.00 am—5.00 pm, Saturday 10.00 am—5.00 pm and Sunday 9.00 am—7.00 pm. The organising committee would like to hear from anyone who is willing to loan a nativity scene for display, in particular cribs from other cultures, previous eras or which “have a story”. Security is guaranteed. If you are able to assist please leave your name at the Cathedral Office on 5331 2933.

PIETY STALL

Columban calendars and Christmas cards are available for purchase.

LITURGY ROSTERS

St Alipius liturgy rosters are available this weekend.

VISITATION TO THE HOMES

As there is a need for visitation to the homebound with Holy Communion, anyone who is prepared to undertake this important ministry is asked to contact Jim at the Parish Office on 5332 6611.

ADVENT REFLECTION GROUP

Weekly meetings will continue at 10.00 am on Thursdays in the Meeting Room of St Alipius Church.

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY CHRISTMAS APPEAL

We invite you to be part of our annual Christmas Appeal. We are most grateful for the support we receive from our parish as it enables us to continue our assistance to those in need in the local area.

We share with you the following facts to give an insight into the need that exists in our state. In the last financial year the Society distributed support to the value of \$11.6 million across Victoria. This is an increase of over \$1 million on the previous year.

Envelopes are available at the Piety Stall. All donations are used in the Ballarat area and donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible.

MERCY CONNECT BALLARAT

Supporting refugee and asylum seeker students in local schools

Mercy Works is currently recruiting volunteers to support refugee and asylum seeker students in Ballarat schools through the Mercy Connect project. The volunteer commitment is for approximately three hours per week for four school terms. Experience working in an educational setting is preferred, but you will receive ongoing training and support. Initial training for new volunteers will be held in February 2017. Contact Paulene Barton—Mercy Connect Project Coordinator on 0417 624 330 or email mercyconnect@gmail.com for information and an application form. Applications close on 2nd February 2017.

CAROLS IN THE CATHEDRAL

A Festival of Readings & Carols. Friday 23rd December at 7.30 pm at St Patrick’s Cathedral. See Notice Board for details.

PARISH RECORDS

If you are new to the Parish and/or have not provided details you are invited to complete a Census Card and return to the Parish Office. The cards are located in the church foyer.

STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Would the user of Env No 139 please contact Jim at the Parish Office on 5332 6611 (Tuesday, Thursday or Friday).