

Reflection on the Gospel-1st Sunday of Advent Year C

(Luke 21:25-28, 34-36)-Veronica Lawson RSM

Today's gospel passage, with its vivid description of the end-time signs, may seem a strange choice of reading for Advent and the beginning of the Church year. It is only strange if we take the descriptions literally and focus on the old rather than the new that is forever breaking into the world. The image of Jesus coming on the clouds belongs within an ancient understanding of the structure of the world in which God and God's heavenly court is located in the heavens above. It might function in our times as a reminder that the Incarnation, "of God's becoming material" (Karl Rahner), is an ongoing cosmic event.

The Advent and Christmas periods are about the coming "in power and great glory" of the One who brings the liberation of our God. The earliest Christians believed that Jesus would return in their own times and bring everything to completion. Some decades after the death of Jesus, the members of Luke's community had come to realize that this second coming of Christ was not just around the corner as they had expected. They then needed to be reminded that a delayed return was no excuse for lack of vigilance.

Suffering is part of life and God's advent or coming in the lives of the suffering takes myriad forms. From Luke's perspective, the sufferings of the present may well be the prelude to a new experience of the presence of God in the world. An attentive heart and constant prayer for the strength to withstand whatever comes-this is the proper stance for the Christian believer.

This gospel passage is best read against the backdrop of today's first reading from Jeremiah that looks to the fulfillment of God's promise of the "virtuous branch for David". The organic metaphor of the branch reminds us of the interconnectedness of God's people and of all being across the ages. The virtue of the expected descendant of David finds expression in honesty and integrity, literally "justice and righteousness/right relationship".

Justice in the Hebrew tradition is about redress in the law courts for the most vulnerable. Righteousness is about right relationships as well as the equitable sharing and proper use of Earth's resources. Justice and righteousness are two sides of the one coin. Our prayer and practical action this Advent might embrace the concerns of those who yearn for liberation from various forms of oppression, including those seeking asylum among us and those who have sought asylum yet still await resettlement. Our Advent could make a difference to their Christmas.

BULLETIN for FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR C



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, 30th NOVEMBER 2015

MONDAY:	No Mass
TUESDAY:	No Mass
WEDNESDAY:	No Mass
THURSDAY:	9.30 am in Parish Church
FRIDAY:	9.30 am in Parish Church
SATURDAY:	Sacrament of Reconciliation at 10.00 am

NEXT WEEKEND'S MASSES

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

READINGS - SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR C

First:	Baruch 5:1-9
Second:	Philippians 1:4-6.8-11
Gospel:	Luke 3:1-6

ANNIVERSARIES: Laurie Lavery, Anne Veronica Duck, Kevin Howlett, Hondria Callahan, Margaret Maddighan, Laurence Galvin, Eris Blood, Pahay Dhay, James Roach, Tom Torpy.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK: Nell McGettigan, Pamela Hayes, Anthony Conroy, Nathan Cambell, Karen Hayes, Denise Learmonth, Mary-Rose McLaren, Cath Wheelahan, Marinna Lenkic, Barbara Keirl, Mick Kent, Mary Barnett.

COUNTING TEAMS:

This Week: .Team 12: E.Kennedy ©, C. Stewart.

Next Week: .Team 1: L. Noonon ©, G. Clarkson.



COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:

PARISH:	Envelopes:	\$ 1,265.00
	Loose money:	\$ 300.00
	Credit cards:	\$ 3,804.00
	Direct debits:	\$ 555.00
		\$ 5,924.00
PRESBYTERY:		\$ 994.00

EVENTS

- Wednesdays **Rosary** in the Chapel of Visitation at St John of God Hospital at 12.45 pm. All welcome.
- Wednesday afternoons **Legion of Mary** meets at Nazareth House , Mill St. Ballarat, at 1.30 pm. Enquiries: 5332 8624 or 5332 7227.
- **Legion of Mary Prayers:** Prayers of Petition to Mary, Mother of Perpetual Help, will be held at St Patrick's Cathedral from 11.15am—11.45 am on 1st & 3rd Thursdays.

JUBILEE OF MERCY

Pope Francis has announced an Extraordinary Jubilee - Holy Year of Mercy to Commence on 8th December 2015, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception and will conclude on Sunday, 20th November 2016, the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. All are invited to attend the Opening of the Door of Mercy at St. Patrick's Cathedral, Ballarat by Bishop Paul Bird CSsR on Sunday, 13th December, 2015, at 10.30 am. Refreshments will follow the Mass.

OLHC CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH

OLHC Christmas Day lunch will be held in OLHC Parish Hall. 482 Gillies St., Wendouree from 12.00 midday - 2.00 pm (meal at 12.30 pm). Transport provided. Bookings by 24th December (add any diets). Phone: 0419 975 914.

ADVENT REFLECTION GROUP

10.00 am, Thursdays, in the meeting room of St Alipius Church.

COLUMBAN CALENDARS

Are available at the Piety Stall—\$9.00 each, or if multiple copies are purchased \$8.00 each. Christmas items also available including cards, packs of eight for \$3.00.

ST VINCENT de PAUL

All parishioners are invited to the Mass for deceased members of the St Vincent de Paul Society to be celebrated at **10.00 am on Thursday, 3rd December at OLHC, Wendouree.**

ST. VINCENT de PAUL CHRISTMAS APPEAL

We invite you to be part of our “Restore their hope this Christmas” appeal. Envelopes are available at the Piety Stall. All donations are used in the Ballarat area and donations of over \$2.00 are tax deductible.

AN INVITATION FROM THE DIOCESAN SUSTAINABILITY GROUP

You might like to take time each day of the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris (30 November-11 December) to pray Pope Francis' Prayer for the Earth “All powerful God you are present in the whole universe and to the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one. O God of the poor, help us to rescue the poor and abandoned of this earth, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, so that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth. Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with each creature as we journey towards our infinite light. We thank you for being with us each day . Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace.”

MERCY WORKS

Has launched a campaign to raise funds to provide relief for the drought in PNG. The campaign is in direct response to a request from the Bishop of Daru-Kiunga who has requested funds to be able to supply fresh drinking water. People can donate by:

- The campaign is live on <https://chuffed.org/project/let-mercy-rain>
- Is on the Mercy Facebook page with a direct link to the crowd funding site
- Via the Mercy website - special donate button at www.mercyworks.org.au
- Paper campaign (see forms on notice board)

CENTACARE ANNUAL TOY DRIVE

For more information on donating and assisting this Christmas, please contact Centacare Appeal Coordinators, Keryn Monshing, Jenny Grima or Joanne Woodland on 5387 7900 or keryn.monshing@centacareballarat.org.au

HELP NEEDED

A Sudanese family ha come to live in our neighbourhood. The mother of six children, all of whom are students at primary, secondary or tertiary level, is seeking part-time casual work. She has excellent English, certificate in Child and Aged Care with related services such as hygiene and basic house cleaning. For more enquiries phone Rita on 0408 031 019.