

**Reflection on the Gospel: 1st Sunday of Advent Year B
(Mark 13:33-37)**

-Veronica Lawson RSM

“Eyes wide open” is the proper stance for gospel people. The little parable that is the gospel reading for this first Sunday of the new liturgical year forms the conclusion to Mark’s so-called apocalyptic discourse. Apocalyptic literature emerged within Judaism in the context of crisis or persecution. It was intended to provide hope in the midst of disaster: God’s coming can reverse the sufferings of the present. The Markan discourse is delivered as a farewell teaching to the inner circle of Jesus’ disciples. The concluding verse indicates that it is intended for a wider audience, however: “what I say to you, I say to all...” Like Peter, James, and John, Christian disciples through the ages are invited to stay awake, to be on the lookout, to be alert.

This cycle of the liturgical year begins and ends with Mark 13 and a focus on the end of the present order of things. It may seem strange to begin the year with such a reflection. Is Advent not a time of preparation for Christmas, for the coming of the Christ child into the world? Mark has no account of the birth of Jesus. His gospel begins with the immediate preparation for the adult ministry of Jesus. From the very outset, his interest is in the coming of God’s reign of justice and compassion. That is, in fact, what Advent is about: living in hopeful expectation that God’s dream for a transformed world might be realised.

The parable of the watchful gatekeeper forms the conclusion to a farewell discourse that the Markan Jesus addresses to his disciples. The disciples are told to be alert and watchful through the four watches of the Roman night: in the evening, at midnight, at cock-crow, and at dawn. The parable thus foreshadows aspects of Jesus’ suffering that was to be compounded by the abandonment of his closest friends. Peter, James, and John will fall asleep in Gethsemane. The disciples will all disperse and Peter will deny him. We find our own experience mirrored in that of the disciples. It is easy to lose hope in the face of overwhelming violence and even to lose focus.

Advent is about recognising our own tendency to be less than vigilant and even to turn away when our presence is most needed. It is about allowing the grace of God to take hold in our hearts, keeping us watchful for the sake of those on the edge and for the sake of a regenerated Earth. Most of us would agree that our Earth communities are in crisis. We need to be alert to causes as well as to consequences so that the cycles of violence might eventually be broken. Our gospel asks no less of us.

BULLETIN FOR 1ST SUNDAY IN ADVENT, YR B



ST ALIPIUS PARISH, BALLARAT EAST

Including St Peter & Paul’s, Buninyong

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**MASS TIMETABLE FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING
MONDAY, 4th DECEMBER 2017**

MONDAY:	No Mass
TUESDAY:	5.00 pm in Mercy Centre
WEDNESDAY:	11.00 am in Mercy Centre
THURSDAY:	2.00 pm Anointing Mass
FRIDAY:	9.30 am in Parish Church

NEXT WEEKEND’S MASSES

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

2nd SUNDAY IN ADVENT, YEAR B

READINGS	First: Isaiah 40:1-5.9-11
	Second: 2 Peter 3:8-14
	Gospel: Mark 1:1-8

RECENT DEATH: Sylvia Dunkley.

ANNIVERSARIES: Peter Lamb, Laurie Lavery.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK: Nathan Cambell, Denise Learmonth, Cath Wheelahan, Terry McGarry, Kevin Walsh, Peter Clohesy, Frank Nolan (Buninyong), Mary Barnett, Fiona Dickinson, Carmel Doherty, Pauline Murphy, Mary Martin, Maria Wilson.

COUNTING TEAMS:

This Week: Team 3: M. O'Donnell ©, L. O'Donnell.

Next Week: Team 4: C. Tarquino ©, M. Tarquino.



COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:

PARISH:	Envelopes:	\$ 920.50
	Loose:	\$ 300.00
	Direct Debits:	\$ <u>565.00</u>
		\$ 1,785.50
PRESBYTERY:		\$ 736.00

ADVENT REFLECTION GROUP

On Thursdays, during Advent at 10.00 am in the Church meeting room.

ADVENT SHOPPING LIST

Please pick up your shopping list from the Church foyer.

COMMUNIAL RECONCILIATION

Tuesday, 5th December in St Alipius Church at 7.00 pm.

ANOINTING MASS

Will be held on Thursday, 7th December at 2.00 pm followed by afternoon tea in St Alipius Hall. If you need transport please contact a member of the Caring Group. We would appreciate the contribution of a plate for afternoon tea.

CHURCH WORKING BEE

At St Alipius Church this Sunday following the 9.00 am Mass to clean and prepare for Christmas. Please bring dusters, vacuum cleaners, window cleaning equipment, ladders, etc.

GIVING TREE

Christmas is a joyous time when we celebrate the birth of Christ. Unfortunately, some people are living in very poor circumstances, so this is an opportunity to bring some joy at Christmas. The Giving Tree is at the back of the Church, and if you can help please take a card and place it on a gift to be returned around the tree as soon as possible but no later than Sunday, 17th December.

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. Envelopes are available at the Piety Stall.

Donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible and are all used in the Ballarat area.

153 YEARS EUREKA REBELLION—3 DEC 1854

The battle lasted 20 minutes, 22 diggers and 5 troopers were killed.

What does Eureka mean to us today? Our parish has a proud history in the events of the uprising. Have you seen the flag? Visit the museum, locals are admitted free when taking visitors. Help save the museum.

GADRC Ballarat

Be inspired by the stand at Eureka by ordinary people that led to the reform of unjust laws. Join the Grandmothers and friends in calling for the evacuation of the unjustly held men on Manus to the safety of Australia where they can find a place of safety. Tuesday 5th December, 11.00 am to 12.00 noon under the Eureka flag at the Bakery Hill round-a-bout at the start of Victoria Street.

BUILDING A HEALTHIER CHURCH

These conversations which commenced followed the presentations at YTU Box Hill by Maria Kirkwood, Francis Sullivan and Bishop Vincent Long will continue in the Cathedral presbytery with the next gathering on Thursday, December 7th at 4.00 pm. All are welcome to join this open dialogue.

FAREWELL FOR BRENDAN & JILLIAN MAHER

As you are all well aware our dear friends Brendan and Jillian Maher are taking up a new opportunity next year in South Gippsland. Brendan has accepted the position of Principal at St Mary's in Yarram.

Brendan has served as Principal at two of our Parish schools, St Alipius Parish School and Emmaus Catholic Primary School. He has been an amazing leader of students, staff, families and our wonderful parish. We will have the opportunity to acknowledge and thank Brendan and Jillian for their commitment to our community at a Parish Mass at St Alipius on Sunday, 10th December at 10.30 am. We invite everyone to join Brendan & Jillian for a cuppa in St Alipius Hall after Mass and ask that families bring a plate to share. Thank you!

Any queries please phone Tanya on 0427 418 155.

LOUD FENCE CLEAN UP DAY

Come along and help our community tidy our fence, and strengthen our recovery and message of "No More Silence". BYO tools and gloves. BBQ provided.

When: 10th December 2017; 11.30 am to 2.00 pm.

Where: St Alipius, Victoria Street, Ballarat East.

RSVP and Queries: loudfenceballarateast@gmail.com

SR MARIE DAVEY RETIREMENT

Sr Marie has been a part of Catholic Education in our parish and diocese for about "100 years" (that would be how many hours of dedicated service she has given).

Sr Marie's service was acknowledged last Friday evening at Damascus College.

On behalf of the Parish and the preceding Parish Priests, I would like to offer our thanks and appreciation to Marie for her dedication, witness and the joy of learning that she has brought to so many young people. Fr Peter.