

# **Advent Season**

## **Colour: purple**

### **First Sunday of Advent Year A**

**First Reading Isaiah 2 1-5**

**This is what Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem:**

**2 In the last days the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream to it.**

**3 Many peoples will come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths. The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem'.**

**4 He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war any more.**

**5 Come, O house of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the LORD.**

#### **What's going on?**

**The prophet Isaiah is talking about the coming of God's reign. He has a vision of all the different people's coming together in peace. These are 'the last days' but also a new beginning. God's reign will see the end of war, so different nations will not need swords or spears any more and will work together in harmony. So a time of peace and unity is coming when everyone will live the way God wants at last. This wonderful vision of peace and harmony is something we should all try to imagine and try to help make real.**

**Psalm 122 (121 Roman Catholic)**

**A song of ascents. Of David.**

**1 I rejoiced with those who said to me, Let us go to the house of the LORD.**

**2 Our feet are standing in your gates, O Jerusalem.**

**3 Jerusalem is built like a city that is closely compacted together.**

**4 That is where the tribes group, the tribes of the LORD, to praise the name of the LORD according to the statute given to Israel.**

**5 There the thrones for judgment stand, the thrones of the house of David.  
6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: May those who love you be secure.  
7 May there be peace within your walls and security within your citadels.  
8 For the sake of my brothers and friends, I will say, Peace be within you.  
9 For the sake of the house of the LORD our God, I will seek your prosperity**

### **What's going on?**

The psalm is a song of gladness and continues in the same vein as the Isaiah vision, with all the peoples coming to Jerusalem, the holy city with one purpose, to give praise to God, where there will be peace and security for all.

### **Second Reading Romans 13 11-14**

**11 And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.**

**12 The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armour of light.**

**13 Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy.**

**14 Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.**

### **What's going on?**

St Paul is talking to his friends about the end of the current age being much nearer than they think and a new beginning of God's reign being about to start. This new beginning means that his friends cannot behave badly because they have to get ready for the fresh start. They have to wake up and start living as true Christians.

### **Gospel**

#### **The Day and Hour Unknown**

**36 No-one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.**

**37 As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.**

**38 For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark;**

**39 and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.**

**40 Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left.**

**41 Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.**

**42 Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.**

**43 But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into.**

**44 So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.**

### **What's going on?**

**This is Jesus talking about the coming of God's reign and suggesting to his disciples that a new beginning is very close. He urges them to be very careful to be ready for what is God is going to do, because it would be easy to get distracted and miss it. He illustrates the urgency by comparing the situation to Noah and the Flood, or a burglar breaking into a house while the owner is asleep.**

### **Why these passages?**

**The overall theme is 'the Day of the Lord'. If Advent is about 'coming' then what is coming is Jesus. Advent is about preparing for us to see Jesus born in Bethlehem. But we are preparing for more than the memory of his birth, we should be getting ready to welcome God himself and all that means for human beings. These passages remind us of what a world entirely reconciled to God should look like, full of peace, co-operation and kind and gracious living with one another. Christmas gives us a new beginning of this kind, a new chance to start making the world a better place. All these passages suggest that we should wake up and become fully alive to the possibility that this can be real, not just a dream.**