

HOMILY FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT Year of Luke

- Advent is about waiting, patience
 - Not highly prized virtue in our society
 - Do not like to wait in lines or for doctor in waiting room
 - Cannot wait for Christmas
 - Stores act as if Christmas was here day after Halloween
 - We get so sick of Christmas that we do not celebrate it as a season of joy and wonder
 - the day after, no longer hear Christmas carols and decorations are taken down
 - lose meaning of both Advent and Christmas, too busy trading gifts that we almost miss the greatest gift of all from God, Son of God become human, one of us
- Purpose of Advent is to remind us that life itself is a process of waiting
 - Repeat in a ritual form the waiting of Israel and nature itself for coming of the redeemer
 - We prepare to celebrate the Incarnation of Jesus, God has become flesh
 - Readings remind us that humanity has sinned, we separate ourselves from God
 - We make destructive choices to our relationships with others and to ourselves as well as ignoring or rejecting God
 - From the beginning of life we have been wounded as the result of the sins of those who have gone before us
 - But we also wound the lives of those who come after us with our own selfish behavior
 - Incarnation is the beginning of Jesus healing our souls, our very beings
 - He announces God's love, that God wants us to be whole
 - Wishes to restore us to being people of integrity, to bring reconciliation to our wounded relationships
 - Advent reminds us that we still wait for the healing offered us through the sacraments
 - Must not be a passive waiting, need to prepare ourselves so that we soften our hearts
 - Need to be able to hear Word of God, to feel presence of Jesus in Eucharist and Reconcil.
- Importance of this waiting and preparation for coming of Jesus into our lives is emphasized by another waiting
 - As the gospel reminds us there will be a final coming of Jesus at end of world
 - Personal end of world for each of us will be our death
 - Idea of death can be fearful – images of darkness and world around us seeming to fall apart
 - Jesus warns us that waiting for our end should not be a passive waiting
 - May be tempted to try to distract ourselves with carousing, drunkenness or focusing on the anxieties of daily life
 - Interesting that Jesus equates anxiety with drunkenness
 - Focusing on worries instead of trusting in God
 - Can be way of avoiding God and restoring our relationships to health
 - If we prepare for the moment of standing before Jesus at the time of judgment, He promises the safety and security of knowing that He has been with us throughout our life
 - As we remain vigilant for his coming, He shows us the path to life with him
 - He shows us the ways of kindness and constancy
 - He promises us his eternal friendship
- Anticipation and waiting can seem frustrating, tempted to short circuit process through distractions
 - It can however give us opportunity to prepare ourselves for the Lord's coming both at Christmas at end of our lives
 - Through preparation we will be ready to truly rejoice and find satisfaction in the presence of the Lord