

Webcam Broadcast C-19 26+9

Hello Everyone! I hope you are all safe and well.

It's Monday 30th November 2020.

My basic Message this Monday is:

We have arrived at the Season of Advent, the Holy Season of Hope, given to us by God each year, as the grace we need this year to help us cope with the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Last time I focused a little on the great Primeval Promise at the beginning of the human story that evil would not eventually prevail.

As we prepare for Christmas 2020, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus who is the one who can save us from the consequences of evil.

Yesterday, Sunday, we began the Holy Season of Advent.

Advent is about Waiting, Hoping, Preparing.

The colour of Advent is purple. Advent is above all the Season of Hope. The Birth of Jesus, at the end of Advent, makes it so.

We are all probably at a bit of a low ebb due to the fatigue of Covid-19. Advent is an opportunity for the renewal and revival of Hope.

What is Hope? The Green Catechism I had at primary school says that Hope is one of the 3 Divine Virtues, the other 2 being Faith and Charity. Preparing for Confirmation I learnt,

Question 127: Why are Faith, Hope and Charity called Divine Virtues?

These virtues are called divine because they have God for their direct object.

Then, Question 130: What is Hope?

Hope is the Divine Virtue by which we desire and firmly expect eternal happiness with God Himself and the means to obtain it.

Question 131: Why do we hope in God?

We hope in God, because He has promised us eternal life, and because He is infinitely powerful, good and merciful, and is faithful to his promises.

Hope has to do with what lies ahead and is, as it were, around the corner, out of direct view. The ground of our Hope is Jesus. Jesus came, sent by God, as the answer to our deepest needs, prayers, hopes and desires.

The Scripture Readings we hear at Mass during Advent trace some of that longing from of old, a longing that God responded to by promises that would be fulfilled in Jesus. That's why we say that God is faithful to his promises.

Here's an example from the First Reading for Mass next Sunday, the Second Sunday of Advent. The prophet Isaiah speaks God's Word to the people, and says that God is coming with power to gather the people like a shepherd:

Console my people, console them ...

Then he goes on to describe the one who will bring that consolation:

*Here is the Lord coming with power ...
He is like a shepherd feeding his flock,
gathering lambs in his arms,
holding them against his breast
and leading to their rest the mother ewes.*

We read this as a reference to Jesus. (Is 40: 1-5, 9-11).

One way to focus in on this bounty from God is to have a Sacred Space at home. You could call it a Domestic Church project. Make it an Advent Space by placing something that speaks to you of Jesus coming. Use a candle and have some purple colour, maybe some greenery too. You can add to it as we move through Advent. It might develop as an Advent Wreath. A star might feature nearer Christmas Day.

You could share a photo of it with us, and you may have ideas that we could pass on that might be a help to other parishioners.

Whenever you pass by or notice that Sacred Space at home, say the great Advent prayer: *Come Lord Jesus, do not delay!*

Encourage family members to do the same.

Perhaps gather at it, and say the Hail Mary together, a lovely Advent prayer, or the Angelus.

You could play some Advent music, sing an Advent song.

If you want to be a bit more ambitious, click on the [Advent Resources](#) button of the Homepage of the Parish Website. There are many helpful resources there.

You might find the "[Prayers At Home For Advent](#)" helpful.

It's in booklet form that you could download and use for prayer.

I pray that this Advent above all will be special for you and for your family. The Covid-19 Pandemic is a reminder to us of our vulnerability and our need. Jesus came in response to that need. And may Jesus, the Good Shepherd, lead you forth through the days of this Advent, and may he hear and answer every one of your prayers.

Be gentle and patient with yourself in these difficult and uncertain times.

Tóg bog é.

Until next time.

Keep safe.

Slán agus beannacht.