

He loves us and wants our salvation. Advent is a time to remember God's great gift, the gift of his own beloved Son, made human to be one like us. The Son then shared His Father's love by giving His own life for everyone who comes to Him. During this season of Advent, we are invited to

give, in return, our gift to God by preparing ourselves for his coming.

This is the time, as today's gospel reminds us, *"therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour."*

Redempt Jawa CSsR
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We Respond ...

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (or a hymn)

To you, I lift up my soul, O my God. In you, I have trusted; let me not be put to shame. Nor let my enemies exult over me; and let none who hope in you be put to shame.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 121)

ANTIPHON: Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord.

RESPONSE (R): Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord.

LECTOR: I rejoiced when I heard them say: "Let us go to God's house." And now our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem. **R.**

LECTOR: It is there that the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord. For Israel's law it is, there to praise the Lord's name. There were set the thrones of judgement of the house of David. **R.**

LECTOR: For the peace of Jerusalem pray: "Peace be to your homes! May peace reign in your walls, in your palaces, peace!" **R.**

LECTOR: For love of my brethren and friends I say: "Peace upon you!" For love of the house of the Lord I will ask for your good. **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Alleluia, alleluia! Lord, show us your mercy and love, and grant us your salvation. Alleluia!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (or a hymn) The Lord will bestow his bounty, and our earth shall yield its increase.

TODAY'S READINGS Isaiah 2:1-5; Romans 13:11-14; Matthew 24:37-44

NEXT WEEK (2nd Sunday of Advent, Year A) Isaiah 11:1-10; Ps 71; Romans 15:4-9; Matthew 3:1-12

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Are you ready for Advent?

Today we want to be ready and well prepared for whatever it is that we are expecting to happen. We want everything to be on time. We don't want to waste time waiting for something, not knowing when it will happen.

This also applies to our discipleship journey. We want to know when the Lord is coming. So that we can prepare and be ready for His coming. But, as Jesus tells us; *"about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father"*. It might sound pessimistic. It might even prompt some doubts in faith. But Jesus does not intend to discourage us. He assures us that His coming is certain, but that its coming will be unexpected.

The season of Advent returns and a new liturgical year begins as we celebrate the first Sunday of Advent today. We will hear again and again these words: *"The hour is at hand, you must be ready for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour."* Advent invites us to enter into the stage in which *"the coming of the Lord"* is promised

but, as for when it will happen, no one knows. The timing is not the crucial matter; it is our preparation that matters.

The Advent season provides us with an opportunity to prepare and be ready. It invites us to be an Advent people, waiting for the Lord's coming. It calls us to be active in waiting confidently for his coming, setting our hearts on God, and deepening our relationship with God and His people. Saint Paul says, *"We instructed you how to live in the way that pleases God, and you are so living, but make more progress still."*

Advent announces that the Lord's coming will happen soon. It is a time of preparation. It calls us to ourselves, because we know that the Person who is coming has the power to change our lives, and that He will take us into his own Kingdom where we will share true joy and the fullness of life. We must always be ready because He comes at an unexpected time, with no great fanfare or grand parades.

The Lord comes again because