

## Reflection for Advent Sunday

Advent is a time of waiting, and a time to prepare to meet God anew. The idea of preparation suggests the need to be busy – in making plans and preparations in order to have everything in place in good time. Most years, for many people, this is a very busy, stressful, anxiety provoking time of year. Today's readings from Isaiah and Mark seem to fuel the feeling of unease, anxiety and uncertainty (familiar feelings anyway to us, for 2020?). The readings imply that something scary is coming – and we're not quite sure what to do about it. Jesus' disciples Peter, James, John and Andrew may have begun to wish they hadn't asked Jesus to tell them more about the 'coming of the Son of Man'!

But Jesus gives some simple, practical advice on how we can prepare; 'Keep alert', and 'Keep awake'. The notion of keeping awake and alert, however, *don't* seem to point to busy-ness.

Jesus asks for *inner* preparations in these next few weeks; being alert, awake and aware of God and signs of his presence here now, so that our minds and hearts are ready to welcome the Son of Man anew. Or to put it another way; let's *deliberately* take time in these weeks, to be still and reflect on the awesome wonder of God coming to earth in human form, and what that might mean for us - and for the world.

*Revd Alison Whiting*

### Codes for the Zoom worship at 10.30

These are codes for Sundays from 4th October to the end of November:

**Meeting ID:** 865 5823 0026

**Passcode:** 504187

**Telephone numbers:** 0203 051 2874, 0203 481 5237, 0203 481 5240, 0131 460 1196

### NEXT SUNDAY 06.12.20 2nd Sunday of Advent

**SERVICES** 10.30 by Zoom, 12 noon in Church tbc



#### READINGS

OT Isaiah 40: 1-11

NT 2 Peter 3: 8-15a

Gospel Mark 1: 1-8

#### CONTACT US

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# St Thomas, Exeter

Sunday 29th November 2020

## Advent Sunday

10.30 by Zoom (*phone-in available*)

It looks as if this might be the last Sunday of virtual worship only, and that we may be back to 'real' worship next week. If that's the case, we will resume the previous pattern of a 10.30 service by Zoom and 12 noon Mass. We will keep everybody posted.

After many years of service, some key people are stepping down and would like others to take on these roles: Mic Corby has been collating the intercessions list that we use weekly, including the names of those who are ill and those who have died; Trevor and Carole Smith have undertaken sacristy duties, including washing linen and purchasing communion wine. We are all very grateful for what you have done seamlessly, and quietly, and thank you. So the parish is looking for **volunteers** to cover these roles. Please speak to me or Revd Sarah in the first instance.

Don't forget **St Andrew** on 30 November, a key saint for a diocese and county with a big coastline.

*Fr David*



## Collect

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and to put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility; that on the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

## Isaiah 64: 1-9

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence—as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil—to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD, and do not remember iniquity for ever. Now consider we are all your people.

## 1 Corinthians 3-9

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

## Mark 13: 24-end

‘But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see “the Son of Man coming in clouds” with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. ‘From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. ‘But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cock-crow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.’

## Post Communion

O Lord our God, make us watchful and keep us faithful as we await the coming of your Son our Lord; that, when he shall appear, he may not find us sleeping in sin but active in his service and joyful in his praise; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

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## NOTICES

**Community Larder** The Community Larder will be collecting on **Tuesdays only** from 10am-12noon, and is allowed to continue operating during the period of lockdown. The collecting point will now be back in the hall. Please continue to be generous.

**Knit and Natter 24<sup>th</sup> November 2020** We are delighted to have received a thank you card from the staff and residents of Parkland House. Mary kindly delivered our five rugs and blankets and it's good to know that they are being enjoyed right here in the parish. We shall continue with Zoom meetings on Thursday mornings. 11.15-11.55am, for the time being, thanks to Vanessa for setting this up. As always, we shall move with the times when we know more clearly what we can safely do together.

Details from Jenny on 01392 498725

Ian Totterdell has completed the **Hospiscare Marathon in a Month**. Thanks to those who have given already; with gift aid the total is now just over £400, which is amazing! Ian is still accepting donations in person or through a just giving page. Details below:

[www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Ian-Totterdell1](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Ian-Totterdell1)

**Advent Reading** Judith recommends the material produced by *Worship in the Waiting* available at <https://engageworship.org/project/worship-in-the-waiting>