



First Sunday of Advent (B)

Stay Awake and Be Prepared! Jesus will Come Again

Aim of this Catechesis:

To reflect with the children on the Liturgical Season of **Advent** in order to learn the double message of Advent:

1. Advent is a time of preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus at Christmas (The First Coming of Christ), and
2. It is also a reminder to us to always be prepared for the Second Coming of Christ at the end of time (The Parousia).

Note to the Catechist:

The Gospel text at the heart of this lesson is:

Mark 13:33-37

Today marks the beginning of a New Liturgical Year. The Gospel texts will be taken largely from the Gospel of Mark. This liturgical year is called the “Year of Mark” (Year B) The overarching theme for Advent in the Year of Mark is the desire of God: *“Be Prepared for the Messiah—the Lord is coming and will come again at the end of time”*. However, the Gospels of Advent in Year B are taken from the Mark, John and Luke. This theme will be developed during the four Sundays of Advent as follows:

<i>“I am coming to Save my People”</i>	
1st Sunday	Be Prepared for the Second Coming of the Lord
2nd Sunday	God sends John the Baptist to help us to prepare for the coming of the Lord
3rd Sunday	Who is coming? John the Baptist clears up some confusion—he is not the Christ.
4th Sunday	A solemn announcement—Jesus, the Messiah is conceived in the womb of his Mother Mary

The Gospel of Advent Sundays 1,2 & 3 are taken from the **Gospel of Mark**, and the Gospel for Advent Sunday 4 is from the Gospel of Luke. (This is because Mark has no account of the Annunciation).

Each Advent we prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ as man (**Christmas**) and to welcome him again when he comes a Second time as Lord (**the Parousia**).

In today's lesson we will reach forward in the Gospel of Mark to listen to Jesus who calls his the people to prepare themselves for when he will come again as Lord.

The Key elements in this event are:

1. Jesus' parable of the master who leaves his servants in charge while he is away,
2. What happens when the master returns?
3. We must be prepared .

We will reflect on these three elements in our catechesis.

Equipment Needed:

A Bible or Sunday Missal

Candle & Matches

Flash Cards (See each Step in the Lesson)

Worksheet: *"Stay Awake—Jesus is Coming Again!"*

N.B. Make sure that each child has his/her own workbook.



LESSON PLAN

Begin the Lesson with a prayer.

Explain to the children:

- Today is the First Sunday of Advent
- It is the beginning of the Liturgical Year.
- Today we enter into a special; time of preparation for:
 1. The celebration of the birth of Jesus at Christmas (the **First Coming of Jesus**), and
 2. The time when Jesus will come again as Lord (the **Second Coming of Jesus**) at the end of time.
- We call the Second coming of Jesus "The Parousia".
- The word "parousia" means "presence" or "arrival"

Step 1: What would we do?

Divide the Class into smaller groups of 6.

Give each group the following task:



Imagine the following:

- The Holy Father is coming to our country.
- One of the places he will visit is our parish.
- You are the members of the Parish Pastoral Council.
- What preparations will you make for the visit of the Pope to the parish?

Blank Flash cards

- Allow the groups time to complete their task
- Then invite the groups to present their plans
- After each group has presented their plans, ask the class:
 - Why would you take such care for this event?
 - Write the Key Words on flash cards or on the board.

Step 2: Our Gospel Text Mark 13:3-37
Its special meaning for us as Christians

Tell the children:

- In today's Gospel, Jesus, tells the people a parable about a master who leaves his house and property to the care of his servants, goes away for a time and then returns unexpectedly
- Let us listen to the parable as Jesus told it.
- Light the candle beside the Bible.
- Encourage the children to be respectful as they listen to the Gospel.
- Read the Gospel text to them.
- They can follow it in their workbooks.

“Jesus said to his disciples: ‘Be on your guard, stay awake, because you never know when the time will come. It is like a man traveling abroad: he has gone from home, and left his servants in charge, each with his own task; and he has told the doorkeeper to stay awake. So stay awake, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming, evening, midnight, cockcrow, dawn; if he comes unexpectedly he must not find you asleep., And what I say to you, I say to all: Stay awake.”

(Mark 13:33-37)

- If necessary read the Gospel text again.
- You can also ask some of the children to read the text out loud for the others.

Now ask the children:

- Who is Jesus talking to??
- What do you think is his message to his disciples?
- Is Jesus speaking only to his disciples?

Now tell the children:

- Jesus came among us as a man when he was born in the Stable at Bethlehem and when he went about preaching the Gospel –the Good News of the Kingdom of God.
- We call this “the First Coming of Jesus”
- Jesus tells his disciples a parable:
- The “word-picture” in the parable helps the listeners to get the message
- Let us look at the word picture in this parable:

The House:

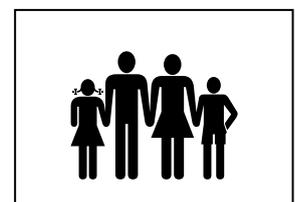
This is the plan of God—to bring all into his Kingdom

The Doorkeepers of the House:

The disciples of Jesus—the Christians— Us—are the doorkeepers
We have to invite people to come into the kingdom of God.
We do this by the way we live as followers of Jesus.

The Servants of the Master:

Each disciple of Jesus has his/her task to do as a practicing Christian.
We call this being true to our Baptism promises.



The Master is Jesus

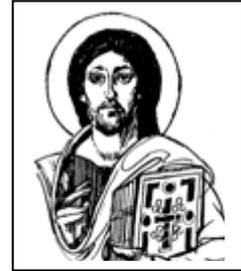
- Jesus has come to proclaim the Kingdom of God his Father
- He came to do this when he was born in Bethlehem and when he went about proclaiming the Good News
- We call this “the First Coming” of Jesus
- He has to come again to finally establish the Kingdom of God at the end of the world
- We call this “the Second Coming of Christ” or the “Parousia”
- The word “Parousia” means “presence” or “arrival”

Step 3: What can we do? Practice & Prayer

Practice:

Tell the children:

- We do not know when Jesus will come again.
- Jesus tells us and everyone else to **STAY AWAKE**
- We are the Doorkeepers and the Servants inside the House.
- What does Jesus expect us to be doing while we “stay awake”?



Worksheet:

Invite the children to turn to the Worksheet **“Stay Awake—Jesus is Coming Again!”** in their workbooks.

Invite them to complete the task on the worksheet.

Allow them time for this.

Link to Sunday Mass:

Tell the children:

The Response to the Responsorial Psalm in today’s Mass is:

***“God of hosts, bring us back;
Let your face shine on us and we shall be saved.”***

This is verse 4 in Psalm 79

It is calling on God to help us to come to his Kingdom.

Join in the response at Mass on Sunday.

Memory Bytes:

Invite the children to read the following in their workbooks:

At the end of time, Jesus will come to establish the Kingdom of God in all its fullness. The whole universe will be renewed according to God’s plan to bring all things under the headship of Jesus Christ. There will be a new heaven and a new earth and God will live among us

(From the Catechism of the Catholic Church)

Now encourage them to learn this off by heart.

Prayer:

There is an ancient Christian prayer for Advent which expresses the longing of the followers of Jesus for his Second Coming. Let us say it together:

**MARANATHA!
COME, LORD JESUS, COME!**



WORKSHEET Advent Week One Year B

“Stay Awake—Jesus is Coming Again!”

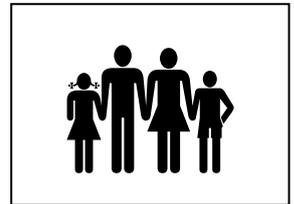
DOORKEEPERS OF GOD’S KINGDOM:

What must we do as Doorkeepers of God’s Kingdom?



SERVANTS OF CHRIST THE MASTER:

What must we do as Servants of Christ the Master?

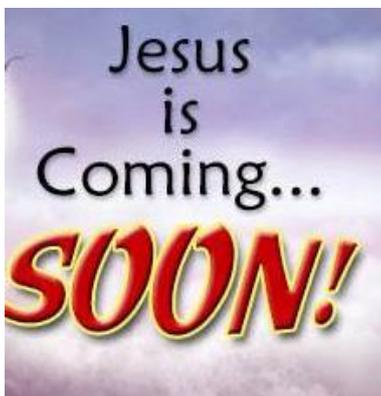
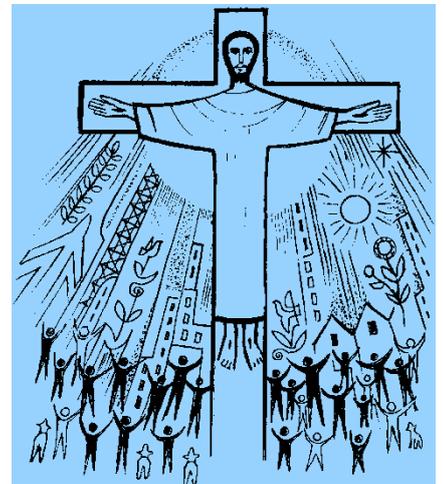


Memory Bytes:

Learn the following off by heart:

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(From the Catechism of the Catholic Church)



Link to Sunday Mass:

The Response to the Responsorial Psalm in today’s Mass is:

***“God of hosts, bring us back;
Let your face shine on us and we shall be saved.”***

Advent Prayer

MARANATHA! COME, LORD JESUS, COME!