Year B – First Sunday of Advent – Nov. 29, 2026

Opening Prayer: (Psalm 80)

Leader: Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.

All: Give ear, O shepherd of Israel, you who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth. Stir up your might and come and save us.

Leader: Turn again, O God of hosts, look down from heaven and see; have regard for this vine, the stock your hand has planted.

All: Let your hand be upon the one at your right, the one you have made strong for yourself. Then we will never turn back from you; give us life, and we will call on your name. Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 63:16-17; 64:1, 3-8.

Following 50 years of Babylonian exile, Israel returns to her homeland. Through the prophet Isaiah's words we are informed that Israel remains in a state of chaos and unfaithfulness in her relationship to God and with one another. We can both hear and, feel the words of longing and waiting that embue Isaiah's song of lament as the prophet petitions God for intervention and for the redemption of his people.

1. Which of Isaiah's words of contrition for his people stand out for you?
2. Can you recall a time in your life when – like Isaiah – you had to "wait" for the Lord? What kind of value was there in such waiting?
3. Isaiah images God with phrases such as, "Our Father…", "our redeemer…", "Lord", "our Potter…". Which of these terms resonates with your image of God?

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

At first glance it would seem that Paul sings only glowing praise of the spiritual maturity of the Church at Corinth. The heart of Paul's letter is hinted at, however, when he tells the Corinthians that the gifts that they have been given are requisite for living their lives in the Spirit as they "…wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ", (i.e. His second coming). A spirit of overconfidence/ complacency has begun to find its way into the community at Corinth that Paul's letter will go on to address.

1. What kind of Advent waiting does Paul's letter call you to?
2. What areas of complacency in your own life are brought to mind because of this reading?

Gospel: Mark 13:31-37

During Advent, we remember the historical waiting for Christ's first coming in the incarnation and, look forward in anticipation to his second coming at the end of time (the parousia). In today's Gospel Jesus tells us that in this in-between time of waiting we are to remain as vigilant as gatekeepers. Is it possible that the invitation to such vigilant readiness could imply that Jesus may come to us in surprising / unexpected ways?

1. What does it mean to you that Christ will come again? How will this affect the way you live and your preparation for Christmas?
2. How does the Gospel invite you to "wait" for Christ's return?
3. Jesus gives the disciples the task of gatekeepers. What is the task he gives to you as you "wait" for his return?
4. What are some of the ways Jesus comes/appears to us in daily life right now? What could we do during this Advent season to become more alert in recognizing his presence with us?

LIVING THE WORD

Set aside 15 to 20 minutes this week for reflection and prayer on a task/relationship that you have become complacent about (especially one that affects the well being of your, family, work, community or world). Dig in and do something about it!

PRAYING THE WORD

Let us pray that the kingdom of Christ may live in our hearts and come to our world.
(Invite personal intentions ending with the Our Father)

CLOSING PRAYER

Leader: Ever loving God, we thank you through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: When he humbled himself to come among us as a human being, he fulfilled the plan you formed long go and opened for us the way to salvation. Now we watch for the day, hoping that the salvation promised us will be ours when Christ our Lord will come again in his glory.

All: Glory be to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, now and forever.
Amen

Leader: Let us offer each other a sign of Christ's peace!