

12/1/2019

First Sunday of Advent

Preparing to receive Christ

It's the beginning of Advent, and the start of a new liturgical year. Are we at the beginning of winter already already? You see nowadays it is hard to tell, especially after you get couple of snow days in October.

The liturgical cycle celebrates Christ as the savior of the world. The changes of the seasons is good, isn't it? So that we are given the opportunity to change. With the change of the season comes the change of vestments, the tempo of our worship, the message of scripture and so on. So you see, it's a whole package that God is giving us. In Advent we prepare for Christ's coming. As you already know, there are two kinds of Christ's coming-his coming to the earth as man and his final return at the end of time. Each of these comings of Christ requires preparation through sacrifice, prayer and penance.

The wreath and candles are full of symbolism tied to the Christmas season. The wreath itself, which is made of various evergreens, signifies continuous life. The circle of the wreath, which has no beginning or end, symbolizes the eternity of God, the immortality of the soul, and the everlasting life we find in Christ.

The wreath as a whole is meant to remind us of both the immortality of our souls and God's promise of everlasting life to us through Christ. It calls us to become participants of the eternity of God in time, think about this. This is what Isaiah prophesied about about 7 centuries before Christ was born. The mountain of the house of God will be established as the highest mountain and all people streaming to it. On his part St. Paul urges us to wake up, put on the whole of Christ so that we don't leave room for any evil desires.

Each of the four candles in our Advent wreath calls us to a message. The first purple candle is hope, the 'prophetic candle' calls us to a message of hope. The second purple candle called the candle of faith 'the Bethlehem candle. It calls us to faith. The third candle is rose, the shepherd candle. It calls us to be joyful for the dawning salvation. The fourth candle is purple, it is the 'Angel's candle'. It calls us to peace. This first week

of Advent calls us to begin our preparation for the coming of Christ at the end of time. Do you want to make an Advent wreath at home? Just set four candles in a tray and spread some evergreens between them and pray a blessing upon it: Its done! Keep hope alive. Light it up and pray. How ready are we for Christ's coming?