

YEAR OF FAITH

Newsletter -no 1



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Enter the Year of Faith no. 1

During this time we will need to keep our gaze fixed upon Jesus Christ, the “pioneer and perfecter of our faith” (Heb 12:2): *(The Door of Faith # 13)*

HOW TO USE BULLETIN No. 1

Do you remember when you were a child and were trying to learn how to use the skateboard? You were afraid that you would fall off.

Your father just stood there for a moment and told you, ‘just get on and do it!’ He could not do it for you. You had to take the risk and try it.

Advent is exactly the same. You do not learn how to live Advent by waiting for someone to teach you how to do it. Jump in with both feet.

Take the words of the Scriptures, the prayers and the readings and live and walk them in your daily life.



TOUCH YOUR ADVENT THIS YEAR

How can we get our hands around Advent?

These four weeks are completely different from any of the liturgical feasts of the Church. We celebrate the birthday of Jesus Christ, the Last Supper, his death and resurrection and the giving of the Holy Spirit. Each Sunday and feast has a particular historical event in mind. The meaning and implications of each event must be unpacked and given concrete application in our lives and our

Church community. But Advent, what event does this season celebrate?

But Advent? What happened? What can we identify with during these four weeks? We search for a definite event and cannot locate a particular focal point. Where is our prayer and our faith supposed to land during these four weeks?

This explains why many Christians have a difficult time identifying with Advent. We do not have handles for it.

Continued..

Advent is an experience. No one can approach it by trying to understand it. We are meant to live it: to pray it, to sing it, to be touched by the symbols, the sounds and the tastes of the season. Advent is meant to lead us into the stories, the hopes and the longings of our ancestors for God's deliverance in their sufferings. Advent is not a doctrinal season that tries to focus on one aspect of our faith. Only as we live and walk through the Scriptural readings for Advent and become involved can we make sense of Advent.

In all parts of life we can only make sense of the event if we participate with both our hands and our feet. No one can understand what it means to have a cook book in their hands until they begin to bake the recipes that are written on the pages. No one can understand the game of hockey until they are actually skating on the ice. Until you are a backpacker along the high mountain trails can you understand why hikers can become so excited about carrying a very heavy load on their backs, groan up some very steep inclines and reach the tops of a windblown mountain. In the climbing up the mountain you will know what this is all about!

HOW LONG THE WAY!
How long the path which leads to you!
Lord, come to meet us,
be our way.



How heavy the burden of our misery!
Lord, come to meet us,
be our rest.

How lonely do we wander,
stumbling together in the darkness!
Lord, come to meet us,
be our brother.

How long, Lord Jesus, do we wait for your return!
Yet, singing you lit hope's flame within our hearts,
come now at last to be our hope's fulfillment.

Allow us to dwell near your heart;
there we belong
forever and ever.

ADVENT IS.....

Advent is an experience. It is a spiritual workout that brings us to walk beside our Hebrew ancestors who cried out for deliverance and peace from the God who had chosen them. We must be moved into the heart and consciousness of Mary and John the Baptist to see the hand of God working among us as they experienced God working within their lives.

Our four weeks must be joined with all the Christian people throughout the world who long to see the hand of God in their lives.

Advent is standing with our ancestors through their trials and hopes, centered in the mystery of Jesus Christ, connected with the sufferings and confusion of people today and always keeping our eyes on the promises of everlasting life.

This December be beside the young adult who is not certain

if they should believe in Jesus Christ or not. There is fearfulness in their doubt: should I say yes to Jesus Christ with all my life?

In silence be very present to your friend who is very fearful about continuing her chemo treatments. The chemicals make her so sick and each day it is more difficult to move.

Will I actually get better? Will my body be healed of this cancer?

Advent links us to all our fellow believers who wrestle with the promises of God's faithfulness and the onslaught of tragic events, boring seasons and contrary children. It is in the mess of life that we live out our commitment to the God who will not abandon us.

Where in Canada do you feel the need for God to lift us from selfishness and misunderstanding of others?

God indeed is my savior;

I am confident and unafraid.

My strength and my courage is the Lord, and he has been my savior.

With joy you will draw water

at the fountain of salvation. [Is. 12,6]

All: Rejoice in the Lord always.

I shall say it again: rejoice! [Phi. 3,7]



When my life
sinks in sadness,
come to me like a
cry of joy.
Come, Lord Jesus
Christ!

WALKING IN THE ADVENT SEASON

Rev. Daniel Martin, International Communities for the Renewal of the earth ICRE, New York

VOICES OF HOPE

*In the face of growing
darkness*

We journey together.

*In the face of ecological
decline,*

We journey together.

*In the face of social
upheaval,*

We journey together.

*In the face of growing
uncertainty,*

We journey together.

*In the face of growing
darkness, we journey
together toward the light.*

*As we search for glimpses of
truth,*

We journey together.

*As we search for heralds of a
new era,*

We journey together.

*As we search for angels of
hope,*

We journey together.

*As we search for glimpses of
truth, we journey together
toward new levels of
meaning.*

*As we build our world out of
chaos,*

We journey together.

*As we build our world out of
shattered illusions of*

superiority,

We journey together.

*As we build our world out of
our inadequate institutions,*

We journey together.

*As we build our world out of
our unfair sharing of*

resources,

We journey together.

*As we build our world out of
the chaos, we journey
together toward a new era of
justice.*

As the universe unfolds,

We journey together.

*As the universe unfolds
through spontaneous*

communion,

We journey together.

*As the universe unfolds
through new levels of*

meaning,

We journey together.

*As the universe unfolds
through new forms of life,*

We journey together.

*As the universe unfolds, we
journey together in God's
great becoming.*

