

Look Book Took
December 2, 2018
Year C Advent I

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

Look:

When was a time you had to be patient? How did you experience that time? Was it exciting, anxious, or perhaps another emotion?

Book:

Luke 21:25-36

Jesus said, "There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

Then he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is

already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

"Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

1. Notice this passage is more cosmic than the one we read recently in Mark. By cosmic, it is more universal type destruction, "the sun, the moon, and the stars..." Mark refers to wars, famines, etc... Do you think this is a hopeless or hopeful passage?
2. "This generation" can mean the temporal generation (so about 30 years). It could also speak to a timeless people. Given that the specific generation reading this would have been 2,000 years ago, what might these end times mean to us? (Maybe end of our individual lives?)
3. How might words live on if there is no earth on which to have them? Who else has been referred to as "word?"
4. Use your own words to explain what it means to be "weighed down by

dissipation and drunkenness and worries of this life?

5. What does it mean to be “on guard” (or another translation, “take heed”)?
6. Explain what it means to be “redeemed” as if you were talking to a 13-year-old who asked the question.
7. When else have you seen the fig tree in the Gospels? (Hint: it withered...)

Took:

Why do you think we use this text during the first Sunday in Advent? Do you think it helps give the message of preparation for Christ? For Christ that will come again?

Thinking of the Look example you used above: How might you relate that time and experience to this in between time in which we live in the Church. Christ already came and Christ will come again. We are in the middle carrying the presence of Christ. The already and not yet.

How do you explain Advent to people who have never practiced it before or even heard of it? Do you use the words patience, waiting, preparing?

We seem to engage, in our culture, the opposite of “not being weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life.” In other words, we are weighed down. How might you take at least one step out of the worries or drunkenness (could be literal or other escape from reality; not necessarily with substance abuse)?

If “this generation passes away,” refers to our own death. If you are willing, what is

one thing you would like to tend to so that you are more ready to meet God? Again, you do not need to share this question or answer if it is too sensitive.

What is one practice you use to prepare for Christmas this Advent? Might it be possible to continue this practice (or something similar) after Christmas? Year round?