

A Coffee with Alessio



The First Sunday of Advent - Year B

Lectionary:

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

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 79(80):2-3,15-16,18-19

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Gospel: Mark 13:33-37

This Sunday we mark the start of a new liturgical year. After the pomp and ceremony of the Solemnity of Christ the King last Sunday, we now enter into this Season of Advent for the next four weeks as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus on Christmas Day. Advent has two purposes – to prepare for the coming of Christ at the end of time and for his birth on Christmas Day. The readings during the first part of Advent focus on Christ's coming at the end of time. The readings from December 17 till December 24 focus on the birth of Jesus. Some of those readings in the week before Christmas focus on the birth of John the Baptist, because his birth and mission was integral to Christ's coming on earth and in turn our Advent preparations for Christmas.

In the Gospel Reading this Sunday we will hear Jesus say:

"Be on your guard, stay awake,
because you never know when the time will come.
It is like a man travelling abroad:
he has gone from his home,
and left his servants in charge,
each with his own task;
and he has told the doorkeeper to stay awake."

Several topics come to mind with this Gospel passage. Firstly, daily we must die to ourselves and live more and more for Christ and others. As we will hear in this passage, we never know

when Christ will come looking for us. Nor do we know where we might find Him. So, we need to make our daily lives a preparation to meet Him.

Secondly, it says each person has their own task to fulfill. That is certainly true of the music ministry. There is the organist, the choir director, the cantor and the choir. One of these people or another person again may prepare the music scores each week so that each person has legally printed copies. Of course, that music has to be filed afterwards for easy access as well keeping the choir area tidy. Even in what can seem a mundane task like photocopying or putting sheet music away, we can prepare for Christ's coming. Certainly in our delivery of liturgical music, let us help God's people find Him dwelling in us, by preparing our music well, so that the members of the gathered assembly can be led with confidence, by us, the musicians.

I mentioned last week that it was the 100th anniversary of QANTAS. What started as airline service between Queensland and the Northern Territory has become a full domestic airline and an international one as well. It was started by two World War One veterans - Paul McGinness and Hudson Fysh. Their plan was to use the Northern Territory to fly overseas. I wonder what these two men would see now in the work they began a hundred years ago. Yes, even on a short or long-distance flight, the Lord may have a task for us. We may also find Him in the person sitting next to us. QANTAS has been used in World War II as well as for evacuating people from Cyclone Tracey and the Bali Bombings. Those people on the frontline in those emergency situations responded to the Lord's call to serve Him through service of neighbour.

So, let us be on our guard, ever ready to serve the Lord wherever we are with eagerness and enthusiasm. In those times when we are weary and would rather rest, let us ask the Lord to help us do His work and to it well.

Music wise as we begin this Advent Season, this Sunday "Open the Heavens" by Brian Boniwell (AOV2 #163, CWBII #243) and Wake, O wake! The night is dying (CWBII #252) tie in very well with the liturgy this Sunday.

Now, as for a coffee and cake this week. I like to keep the desserts simpler during Advent so that I can celebrate Christmas with full joy and splendour. Kitchen on Angove seems an appropriate place to go this weekend, with a flat-white and a slice of banana bread or one of their variations.

Wishing you a very prayerful Advent Season. May it be a time where you can truly prepare for Christ to come at Christmas so our liturgies and meals on Christmas Day will truly be a celebration with the light of Christ as our armour.

Till next week enjoy your coffee and cake!

Mr Alessio Loiacono
Music Field Officer

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