

ADVENT IS A TIME OF PATIENTLY ACTING AND WAITING

We continue our message series

(preaching series) called **CHRISTMAS IS COMING!!!**

What are you hoping for?

This series is a reflection on the Advent season that prepares us to receive the great gift of hope fulfilled — that Jesus comes to save us. Through the gift of the incarnation, God becoming one of us, we then also become like him. Advent helps us to patiently act and wait for the coming of Christ in our hearts and world.

"BE PATIENT, BROTHERS AND SISTERS, UNTIL THE COMING OF THE LORD."

(James 5:7)

Waiting is such a difficult thing for us to do. We live in a world that is so fast!! We have high speed internet, smart phones, Amazon, FaceTime and drive thru banking!! We live in a world where waiting for things is not acceptable. The response to a lack of speed is frustration, anger and complaining. When we want to connect with someone we often times send an email, then when there is no response we call and when that doesn't work we text them. We need everything now—but we know this is not realistic all the time and definitely not practical for our faith.

The Advent season invites us to be patient. Some things cannot be rushed but take the exact time needed for things to turn out right. A farmer can't make crops grow faster and bakers can't have their amazing desserts ready faster. Things need their time to grow and become what they are supposed to be. We need to act but we also need to wait. How can this really work for us this Advent season?

WAITING FOR THINGS TO HAPPEN

Advent is definitely a time for us to wait. We journey through the four weeks of Advent reflecting on God's everlasting love and the gift of the incarnation which brings us freedom, true love and salvation.

We can't make the calendar move faster, we can't skip the long lines, the busy malls or even the cold snowy weather. No matter how much we want things to go

faster, or to skip the waiting — we can't.

We must experience the journey and take one day at a time. Yet the time is super important for us — we need this time of waiting to actually prepare for the love of Christ.

In the midst of all of this, we need to avoid the anger, frustration and complaining that comes with waiting. We can get too frustrated and thus become negative and miss the opportunities of grace in the midst of time. Waiting actually allows us to prepare for the gift of Christmas. Patience brings us grace during Advent and the rest of the year.

"BROTHERS AND SISTERS, DO NOT GRUMBLE AGAINST ONE ANOTHER..."

(James 5)

How can we be patient during this Advent season? How can we wait and act preparing for Christmas? We have to act, serve and reach out

to others seeking to create harmony and community.

This Advent and Christmas season truly stirs our hearts to deeper and more powerful generosity. We can act in love by helping those who are in need. Being patient during this season is helped by going beyond ourselves and helping those in need. To help us truly be patient and open during this season, we simply



need to act as disciples offering hope.

This year our parish has many different ways to help build community and act in patient love. We have our annual Christmas Hamper Program, the Jansen Used Toy Drive, visiting our nursing homes, Blessing Bags for the Homeless and the Giving Trees. In all of these ways we are seeking to build community and truly share our lives with one another. When we do this, we plant the seeds of grace, light and hope in a world that more often than not is in the midst of darkness and despair looking for more.

Prayer, service, confession and waiting are the powerful ingredients for a Christmas filled with peace, joy, love and hope fulfilled!!!

ST. JUDE PRAYER FOR ADVENT

Lord Jesus, your power is infinite, your glory, everlasting.

Quietly you come, as a tiny baby. Ready my heart for the miracle of your birth. Bring light to this dark world, waiting silently for your warmth in the coldness of the night. Waiting is itself your gift, animating my heart with anticipation.

Bless me with needed patience and faithful discipline to prayerfully prepare to welcome and greet you. St. Jude, eternal hope, let your holiness flow into me.

May Christmas joy and burning love take root in me and grow until they bloom on Christmas Day, to carry joy to the world and inspire hope to renew the face of the earth.

Amen