



FAITH CIRCLES

WEEKLY SMALL
GROUP CATECHESIS

1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT • YEAR B

SUNDAY GOSPEL

Stay Awake

MARK 13:33-37

Jesus said to his disciples: '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 home, and left his servants in charge, each with his own task; and he has told the doorkeeper to stay awake. So stay awake, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming, evening, midnight, cockcrow, dawn; if he comes unexpectedly, he must not find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake!'



A WORD FROM POPE EMIRITUS BENEDICT XVI



Today, together with the Church, we are beginning the new liturgical year: a new journey of faith to experience together in

Christian communities, but, as always, also to be taken within world history so as to open it to God's mystery, to the salvation that comes from his love.

The liturgical year begins with the Season of Advent. It is a marvellous period in which the expectation of Christ's return and the memory of

his first coming — when he emptied himself of his divine glory to take on our mortal flesh — reawakens in hearts.

"Watch!" This is Jesus' call in today's Gospel. He does not only address it to his disciples but to everyone: "Watch!". It is a salutary reminder to us that life does not only have an earthly dimension but reaches towards a "beyond", like a plantlet that sprouts from the ground and opens towards the sky. A thinking plantlet, man & woman, endowed with freedom and responsibility, which is why each one of us will be called to account for how he/she has lived, how each one has used the talents with which

each is endowed: whether one has kept them to oneself or has made them productive for the good of one's brothers or sisters.

The Season of Advent returns every year to remind us of this in order that our life may find its proper orientation, turned to the face of God. The face is not that of a "master" but of a Father and a friend. Let us make the Prophet's words our own, together with the Virgin Mary who guides us on our Advent journey. "O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay and you are our potter: we are all the work of your hand" (Is 64:8).

DISCUSS TOGETHER

1. Describe some of the times when you have been 'caught off guard' by a request for help & support or your own need and ability to receive love or care yourself.
2. What were the signs that these events were about to occur? In what ways were you 'awake' or 'asleep' to the events that were about to occur?
3. In the gospel Jesus invites you to stay awake and be ready to receive him. In what ways were you aware or unaware of his presence in what you just shared?
4. In light of your discussion in what ways could raise your level of awareness – spiritually, physically, emotionally, resource – for his presence being revealed to you?

PRAY TOGETHER

Pray for Each Other

- Invite each member to share an intention for which they would like prayer
- As a group pray out loud for each person in turn

Response

Lord Jesus, open our eyes and hearts to see you more clearly.

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, we thank you for your presence in our lives. Open our eyes and hearts to see and feel your presence ever more strongly in order that we may serve you in our neighbour more completely. Amen.