

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (or a hymn) To you, I lift up my soul, O my God. In you, I have trusted; let me not be put to shame. Nor let my enemies exult over me; and let none who hope in you be put to shame.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 121)

ANTIPHON: Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord.

RESPONSE: Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord.

LECTOR: I rejoiced when I heard them say: "Let us go to God's house." And now our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem. **R.**

LECTOR: It is there that the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord. For Israel's law it is, there to praise the Lord's name. There were set the thrones of judgement of the house of David. **R.**

LECTOR: For the peace of Jerusalem pray: "Peace be to your homes! May peace reign in your walls, in your palaces, peace!" **R.**

LECTOR: For love of my brethren and friends I say: "Peace upon you!" For love of the house of the Lord I will ask for your good. **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Alleluia, alleluia! Lord, show us your mercy and love, and grant us your salvation. Alleluia!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (or a hymn) The Lord will bestow his bounty, and our earth shall yield its increase.

TODAY'S READINGS Isaiah 2:1-5; Romans 13:11-14; Matthew 24:37-44

NEXT WEEK (2nd Sunday of Advent, Year A) Isaiah 11:1-10; Ps 71; Romans 15:4-9; Matthew 3:1-12

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is coming*



30 November 2025 1st Sunday Advent Year A

"Stay awake!" It's not exactly the most comforting advice for people who might already be tired at the end of a long year – especially as we join the throngs flocking to shops for the usual Christmas spend-up. Yet that's the cry that greets us on this first Sunday of Advent. The season opens not with tinsel and cheer, but with Jesus telling his disciples to be alert, watchful, and ready for something new.

Isaiah paints a hopeful picture of what this newness might mean: nations streaming to the mountain of the Lord, swords beaten into ploughshares, war replaced with peace. After a year marked by wars, famine and political mayhem, this is a vision for which we would be prepared to stay awake. The psalm aptly echoes our present longing, calling us to pray for peace in Jerusalem and to rejoice at the prospect of God's house filled with pilgrims.

And then comes Jesus' story about Noah's day. People were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, carrying on with ordinary life. Nothing wrong with that, of course—except that they were asleep to the bigger picture. When the flood came, they weren't ready. Jesus says the same will be true of the coming of the Son of Man: two people at work side by side, one ready, one not. So: "Stay awake."

Paul, writing to the Romans, makes it even plainer: "You know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep." His message feels urgent, like an alarm clock going off before the dawn. We wake with a start and

wonder, "Is it too late?"

It's tempting to hear this only as a warning about the end of the world and a possible pending judgement for our sins. But Advent is not about dire predictions or even more dire penitential practices. Advent invites us to hear this biblical message in a gentler, more everyday tone. Stay awake to what God is doing in your life right now. Stay awake to the small gifts that slip past us when we're on autopilot. Stay awake to the people around you who might need attention, kindness, or encouragement.

Advent is a season that sneaks up in the middle of ordinary life. The shops have been in Christmas mode for weeks already. Work deadlines pile up. Social calendars start filling. Christmas lunch planning is pressing. And in the middle of all that noise, the church whispers, "Wake up. Pay attention. Something new is coming."

Staying awake doesn't require us to drink more coffee or get less sleep. It means living with our eyes wide open – choosing not to drift through December in a haze, but to notice where God's peace, hope, and joy are breaking in. Advent asks us to be watchful people, ready to catch glimpses of God's kingdom in unexpected places: in conversations with friends, in moments of silence, even in the messy, imperfect preparations for Christmas.

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