

## **First Sunday Advent 2021**

**Luke 21:25-8,34-6**

### **Beware That Your Hearts Do Not Become Drowsy**

With her first pregnancies my mom would announce joyfully that she was pregnant. By the ninth or tenth pregnancy, she would speak in code to my sisters and simply say, "I missed my period!?" She wouldn't say anything to us boys, but we knew something was up when she started to get the baby clothes down and sort through them. We helped her wash the baby bottles. And then she would tell us, never coming out directly, "I will need your help with this one." Then she would retrieve the baby diapers.

Holding the baby was the best part and feeding was ok. It's what came out the other end. That is why she said, "I will need help with this one." But the joy was genuine, even though it was another mouth to feed. I actually felt sorry for my younger brothers since they were at the end of the hand-me-down clothes-line that kept getting longer. It was the waiting that was the hardest part, because there was the difficult pregnancy of my brother Leo where we almost lost both our mom and the baby.

From now on we had to make room in our lives for another baby. And that baby would grow to be a child, then a teenager, then an adult, and then leave. Once they learn to drive, they leave home. Anyway, the most important part is making room in our lives for another, forever. That is what Advent prepares us to do each year, making room in our lives for Jesus, the baby, the child, the adolescent, the young adult, the man on the cross, forever.

Jesus' Immaculate Conception would have been eight months ago, with Mary's "Yes!" to the angel Gabriel. It isn't celebrated with as much fanfare as his mother's, probably for the simple fact that without Mary's IC Jesus would have been born in sin, Original Sin.

Mary hurries to the high country to visit Elizabeth her cousin, already six months pregnant with the future John the Baptist. Imagine their advent. Advent means coming, the coming of Jesus, but also for Elizabeth the coming of John. I am sure the women were excited for many reasons, first with sharing the joy that both are pregnant. Obviously, Elizabeth showed, a confirmation of the message from the angel Gabriel of her own special pregnancy. Elizabeth got a clue about Mary's pregnancy from her own child, John, that leaped in her womb.

Mary could have simply said, "I missed my period," but my mother used to say, a woman who is pregnant looks different and there is no hiding it. When a woman walked in the door to *Woman Line* there is fear and joy at the same time written all over their face. Mary's fear would have been telling Joseph that she was pregnant.

This was the Advent of all advents, Elizabeth and Mary, which we formally call the *Visitation*. Both would have to make room for a new life, and so would their communities! Joseph would eventually know for sure when his wife came back from her cousin, ***showing***. And then it would be his turn to wait, wait for this baby.

We are given another year to make room for Jesus in our lives. How are we to do that? It has to do with more than just decorating the house. The main focus is our ***Christmas Creche***, or Nativity Scene (complete with three wisemen). Hopefully the empty manger will emphasize again the room we need to make in our hearts for this baby Jesus.

Advent is also a time to take note of how much he might be missing.