

## Homily for Advent 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday Year B, Mark 13:24-37

### Prayer

To begin I like to ask if you can recollect the start of the school year a couple of months ago which seems to be a long time ago. Now that you are thinking about the start of the new school year, can you remember some of the things that you and family did to get you ready for the beginning of school. What are some of the things that you did to get ready, whilst you are thinking about it, I have a few I have written down – buy a new coat because you have grown taller since the summer, new rucksack, pencil case and other school supplies, and perhaps a new sleep pattern.

Can you think of what might be the reasons you and family get things ready at the start of the new school year- is it to make sure you have everything you need for the start of the new year. This is because once you have everything you need for class, then you will be able to pay attention to everything happening in class. For example, if you are prepared then you will have a pencil handy when you need it so that you can write down what the teacher is saying and not miss out because you are looking for something to write with.

This idea of being ready and prepared is what Jesus is telling his disciples in the gospel reading today. I do not know if you heard that part, where he told them to be ready and prepared, to be alert and awake. Do you know the reason we are reading that bible passage is because today is the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent, the beginning of a new church year? Just like the school starts a new year every year so does the church start a new year every year. The Church's year begins with a preparation time which is called advent.

Advent is the time when we as a church prepare for another year of reading, discussing, and listening to stories of Jesus and his teachings. An important reason we prepare for the new church year is the same reason we prepare for a new school year, that is so that

we do not miss a single thing about Jesus, our teacher has to share with us. We can prepare for the new church year by reading and talking about stories that remind us of what Jesus' life and ministry meant and what it mean for us. We also get ready to celebrate his birth in December whilst we stay alert as we watch and wait in anticipation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Jesus Christ our Lord.

As we do these things we are better prepared to hear and respond to Jesus' message of good news and new life and knowing that God's better way is available to us today and for us to live by. Amen.