

WALKING TO
bethlehem

ADVENT SPIRITUAL PACKAGE



WEEK 1
hope

*" Watch therefore, for you do not know
when the master of the house is coming ..."*

- MARK 13: 35



Gospel Reading

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!'



reflection

Reflection

How often have we found ourselves procrastinating? From household chores to school assignments to our work. Many of us tend to procrastinate not because we have more important things to do but because we want to distract ourselves from the present, from the task at hand.

We tell ourselves we still have time and often end up forgetting about the task or find ourselves rushing to get it done when it's near the deadline. When it's over, we mull over our poor choices and chide ourselves for not being disciplined.

Reflection

For me, this habit of procrastination coupled with the COVID-19 measures had brought about great lethargy to my faith journey. The initial inaccessibility of receiving the sacraments and inability to physically gather as community for sessions, retreats and fellowship resulted in much sluggishness. I started to feel distant from the Lord and went into a deep slumber, which resulted in my relationship with the Lord to slowly wane as time went by. Jesus was gradually displaced and I grew increasingly comfortable with the lacklustre state of my relationship with Him. With God “seemingly” out of reach, I began to provide excuses so that I could remain in my slumber and neglect what I was supposed to do, which was to work on my relationship with God and place Him back at the centre of my life.

Reflection

This Sunday's Gospel reminds me of the need to be on my guard and awake from my slumber. Perhaps some of us also need to shake off the lethargy and wait in hopeful anticipation that we would be able to regularly receive the sacraments and gather in our communities in time to come.

As we wait, let us “stay awake” by not being complacent in our faith journey. Let us seek to love the Lord more and endeavour to deepen our relationship with Him by placing Him at the centre of our lives and ordering our lives in such a way that everything that we do lead us closer towards Him.



watch and pray

watch and pray

Prepare: Prayer Space



Before you enter into a time of prayer, we invite you to set up a simple prayer space. You may include a small crucifix, and light a candle.

Breathe:

Close your eyes, and take a few deep breaths. Take note of your body and how you are sitting. Pay attention to any feelings that arise and calmly take note of them.

Music:

Click on the Spotify icon below to listen to our Advent playlist. Let the music help to guide you as you begin your time of prayer and aid in helping to open the ears of your heart so that the Lord's voice is audible to you!

Listen:

Last but not least, allow the Lord to speak to you.. Wait on Him in the expectant faith that He desires to and WILL speak to you, His beloved.



The Journey to Bethlehem



call to action

Call to Action

As we “stay awake”, we all have a part to play in building the Lord’s kingdom and we each have our “own task”. During this busy Advent season, many parishes are in need of volunteers to cope with the additional masses and increased capacity at mass. It would be good if we could volunteer ourselves to assist where help is needed.

Alternatively, we could look through our wardrobe and identify seven pieces of clothing that we would like to donate and attach a bible verse (pray about it!) to each item of clothing before donating it.



checkpoint

Checkpoint

Each week, we will be taking stock of how our hearts are doing as we journey to Bethlehem, using the week's theme as a sign post for reflection. On page 16, you will see an image with several signposts. For each week, we will fill in each signpost with the week's theme until we complete our journey at the Feast of the Epiphany.

We encourage you to print it out so that you may also use it as a prayer activity as you mark out each signpost.

Checkpoint

This week, we focus on HOPE. Let's just pause and spend some time to reflect moments where Jesus was present the past week. In this year of upheaval and uncertainty, what meaning has Hope taken on in your life?

Have I made an effort to place Him at the centre of my work, my conversations, in the many things I've been busy with? To dedicate time and space to pray, to reflect, and notice opportunities to share more about my faith with those around me?

As we enter into this new liturgical year, take a moment to reflect on God's invitation for you as you anticipate the arrival of baby Jesus.

Journey Checkpoints

