



a Kendall Hunt Company

## First Sunday of Advent, Year B, Intermediate - RCLB Lectionary



### Intermediate Session

Isaiah 63:16-17, 19; 64:2-7

Mark 13:33-37

### Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Dear Jesus,

We look forward to Christmas and the joy that it brings.

During the season of Advent, prepare our hearts for your coming.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

### Opening Life Reflection

The theme for this First Sunday of Advent is The Second Coming of Jesus. To begin, invite the children to stand in a circle to form a human advent wreath. Choose four children to hold an advent candle. Explain that the circle of the Advent wreath symbolizes God's unending love for us. The four candles of the wreath represent the four weeks before Christmas. Light the first candle of the wreath and invite the children to reflect on how they can bring the light of Christ to others this Advent season. Go around the circle and invite each child to respond to the question: How can you bring the light of Christ to others?

Allow time for each child to share his or her response to the question. During the Advent

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season we remember Jesus being born as a baby and we also get ready for Christ to come again in glory.

### **Listening to the Word of God**

In the Old Testament reading listen to the prophet Isaiah call upon the Lord's mercy and love.

Read Isaiah 63:16-17, 19; 64:2-7.

Allow for silence.

### **Scripture Discussion Starters**

- How does the prophet Isaiah call out to God?
- Why do the people seek God's mercy and love?
- Why is Isaiah hopeful that the people will be forgiven?



In the gospel today, listen to find out why it is important to keep alert and be ready.

Read Mark 13:33-37.

Allow for silence.

- Why is it important to keep alert and be ready?
- When will the Lord come?
- How can the people be ready for the Lord's coming?

### **Scripture Background**

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Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings using the **Catechist**

**Background** section.

During the season of Advent the scripture readings focus on the coming of Jesus Christ in two ways: First, by anticipating the final coming of the Lord at the end of time. Then, as we get closer to Christmas the scripture readings center on Christ's coming in human history. The gospel for this First Sunday of Advent is clearly focused on being alert and ready for the Second Coming.

In the first reading from the Old Testament the prophet Isaiah calls out to God on behalf of the people. The people have become unfaithful and they are filled with guilt for their sins. Isaiah calls on God, who has saved the Jewish people in the past. He asks God to come and save the people of Israel. Isaiah calls God "our redeemer" which shows the special relationship that Israel shared with Yahweh. Today's passage acknowledges the guilt and brokenness of the people of Israel and it shows their dependence on a merciful God who will save them.

Today's Gospel presents the theme of watchful waiting. Jesus tells the parable of a man who leaves his servants in charge while he goes on a journey, and then he returns unexpectedly. Jesus uses this story to teach about the importance of an attitude of watchfulness and being ready when the Lord comes.

### **Questions for Deeper Reflection**

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- What do today's scripture readings focus on?
- Why does Jesus tell the story about the man who goes on a journey?
- What does Jesus teach about being watchful and ready?

[If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the **Gospel in Life**.]

### **Doctrinal Discussion Starters**

#### ***The Second Coming***

Advent is the season that leads up to and prepares us for Christmas. We anticipate the birth of the Lord, the presence of God among us. During Advent we also look forward to the Second Coming of Jesus at the end of time. As believers we look forward to the Second



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Coming of Christ with hope. The season of Advent reminds us to be ready because we do not know the hour or the day. The end time may be upon us at any moment. We anticipate the Second Coming of Christ with hope and joy because we believe that Jesus will come to bring an end to suffering and death—he will bring the fullness of God’s kingdom. As we wait in joyful anticipation we pray with the early Christians, “Our Lord, come!”

- What do we prepare for during the season of Advent?
- Why do believers look forward to the Second Coming of Christ with hope?
- How can you prepare for Jesus’ coming?

### **Sacrament Connection**

In the Eucharist Christ is really made present. In the celebration of the Eucharist we acknowledge the power of Christ to transform everything. Celebrating Eucharist makes us ready for Christ who may arrive at any moment and bring the fullness of the kingdom.

### **The Gospel in Life**

What is one thing that you can do this week to help you get ready for the coming of Jesus?

