

First Sunday of Advent



This Sunday marks the First Sunday of Advent and the beginning of a new liturgical year, inviting us into a season of hope and preparation. Advent speaks quietly but firmly: begin again. For those affected by a loved one's addiction, this invitation can feel deeply personal. Many of us have lived long seasons of fear, uncertainty, or exhaustion. Advent reminds us that God enters our lives not through dramatic fireworks, but through steady, faithful presence.

Yet Jesus begins this season with a call to spiritual alertness (Matthew 24:37, 42):

*Jesus says to His disciples:
"As it was in the days of Noah,
so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man...
Therefore, stay awake!
For you do not know on which day your Lord will
come."*

Jesus is not warning us into panic but waking us into peace. So often, we can fall asleep spiritually—not through rest, but through worry, resentment, or attempts to control others. Advent invites us to open our eyes again and to let God meet us in the present moment.

He continues with another reminder (Matthew 24:43–44):

*Be sure of this: if the master of the house
had known the hour of night when the thief was
coming,
he would have stayed awake
and not let his house be broken into.
So too, you also must be prepared,
for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will
come.*

Family recovery teaches us this truth in real time. We may not know what tomorrow holds for our loved ones, but we do know that serenity is found in the present. When we stay awake spiritually—through prayer, surrender, fellowship, and healthy boundaries—we remain grounded in what we are called to do, rather than anxiously managing others.

For many of us, Advent begins with the recognition that our attempts to control outcomes have collapsed. This collapse is not a failure; it is the space where God begins building something new. When we acknowledge our powerlessness and let God take the lead, peace slowly replaces anxiety and hope rises where fear once lived. Saint Paul calls us to this spiritual awakening in Sunday's second reading (Romans 13:11–14):

*It is the hour now for you to awake from sleep.
For our salvation is nearer now than when we first
believed;
the night is advanced, the day is at hand.
Let us then throw off the works of darkness
and put on the armor of light;
let us conduct ourselves properly as in the day,
not in orgies and drunkenness,
not in promiscuity and lust,
not in rivalry and jealousy.
But put on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and make no provision for the desires of the flesh.*

For families, “darkness” often looks like denial, fear, resentment, or rescuing behaviors that keep everyone trapped. Advent urges us to step into the light—into truth, humility, and trust in God’s timing. We are called to prepare our hearts not by controlling others, but by allowing Christ to enter the places within us that long for healing.

The principles of recovery help us live this season well: pausing to pray rather than react, letting go rather than cling, and allowing God to restore what we cannot. Advent becomes a time of gentle readiness—watching for moments of grace and remembering that Christ is coming to bring peace not only to the world but to our homes and hearts.

We wait with hope, knowing that the God who brought us this far will continue to guide our steps, one day at a time.

Reflection Questions

- Where have you experienced a spiritual “waking up” in your family recovery journey?
- What helps you stay alert to God’s presence instead of slipping into fear or control?
- How will you prepare your heart this Advent while trusting God with your loved one’s path?

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A Thanksgiving Message of Hope

During this season of gratitude, we thank God for the gift of recovery and the grace that meets us each day. We give thanks for those who walk beside us, for the courage to grow, and for the hope that gently restores our hearts. May gratitude deepen our trust in God's care and strengthen our desire to serve others. With thankful hearts, we continue forward one day at a time.

Sunday Mass Readings this Week

First Reading: Isaiah 2:1-5

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 19:8, 9, 10, 11

Second Reading: Romans 13:11-14

Gospel: Matthew 24:37-44