

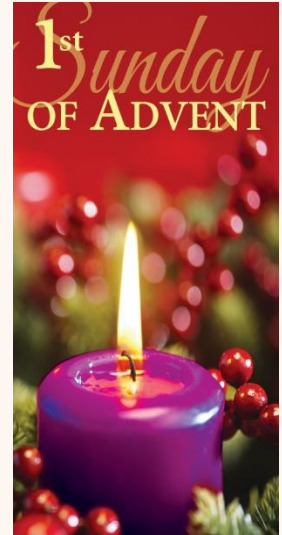


*From the Desk of Father Peter*

*The Coming of the Lord Jesus*

*Today we begin Advent, the season of Holiness and Peace and a new year in the Church's calendar.*

*Some religious traditions like the Jesse Tree and the Advent wreath that we see in church or have in our homes help us to remember the long centuries that the Jewish people of old waited for the coming of the Messiah. By our sharing in the long preparation in any way we can for the Savior's coming, we renew our desire, anticipation, and hope of the Lord's coming again.*



*Advent means "coming" and simply put, Advent is the season when we prepare for the coming of Christ at Christmas. Advent means hope for the future. Advent is a time to be ready and alert while waiting for our God's bountiful mercies. What does the church invite us to do during the season? During the Advent season we are invited to celebrate the plan of salvation by which God called the patriarchs, united them to himself in a covenant of love established through Moses, raised up the prophets, and chose David as the one from whose line the Savior of the world was to be born. The books of the Old Testament, in fore-telling the coming of Christ, "gradually bring into clearer light the figure of a woman, the Mother of the "Redeemer" Lumen Gentium no. 55. She is the Blessed Virgin Mary, whom the Church proclaims as the joy of Israel and the noble daughter of Zion. Mary becomes our model of our "yes" to*



*God. Certainly, a disposition like Mary's must be formed in us over time as we turn from sin and place ourselves at the service of God.*

*There is no need to fear the future. Each one of us can impact the future by living according to our faith teachings. By living out the beliefs of our faith, we prepare for the coming of the Lord at Christmas. I believe that Christ comes to us in three ways:*

- 1. Yes, I believe that Christ has come to us already at Bethlehem on that first Christmas.*
- 2. Yes, I believe he comes to us now every day in such mysterious ways, as in prayer, grace, word, and sacrament, and*
- 3. Yes, I believe, like you do too, that there is yet another coming. Christ will come at the end of time as judge of the living and the dead.*

*This is the reason why we should contemplate the Lord's coming as a blessed season filled with faith, hope, joy, and peace. We should be able to share our faith and tradition with those around us. We live in a noisy world, don't we? Cell phones, television, radio, e-mails, text messages, web pages—the stream seems unending. And not only is it noisy, it's distracting. By living the spirit of Advent, we can encounter Jesus who can transform us. No matter how embedded we are in our sins, if we look to Jesus, forgiveness is possible. In turn, we become stronger in our faith as we prepare for God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.*

*Our responsorial psalm today says, "Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved." Psalm 80:2-3. So as Advent begins, think about who Jesus is for you. This little baby born in a*



*manger is also the Suffering Servant who gave us his life to set us free from sin and death. He is the Lord of all creation who is coming back to bring his people to heaven. May God open our eyes this Advent season so that we can see Jesus in a new way and be transformed by what we experience in our faith. Let us also pray with Mary, the “favored one” of God, that she may show us all the way to Joy. I pray that some day Advent will open up the hearts of all people to the faith we have in Christ Jesus, and our hope and peace of the Lord in the world will be forever.*



*May we all have a prayerful and holy season of Advent.*

*Fr. Peter Enyan-Boadu*

