

ADVENT MESSAGE

As we embark upon the 2024 Season of Advent, we recognize that it has been an unprecedented year with the uptick of violence, and corruption in our land. This can lead us to a dismal plain of despair if we permit it; but we instead must take up the challenge to allow our faith to overcome our deepest fears. As we enter this new liturgical year, we are encouraged to remain resilient and hopeful, that amidst the inner and outer turmoil, our God still reigns.



Let us look forward to the Season of Advent. Most typically known as a season of preparation, a most salient question in this year of our Lord 2024 is, “what are you and I preparing for?” Hopefully our preparations are not so much in terms of the many material things that we have proven we can survive without, but rather a conscious and decisive, opening and cleansing of minds and hearts, to receive once again the Christ-child born anew in our lives.

Each week of Advent we are invited to reflect on a different virtue or gift of the Holy Spirit. Initially, we focus on hope, yes hope amid turmoil, violence and corruption. We are called to be a beacon of hope with words and deeds, to bring life and light to family, friends and even the stranger.

As we prepare to welcome the Prince of Peace, we are called to be heralds of Christ’s peace to those we encounter along the way. Undoubtedly, at a time when temperaments are running short and patience is running low, we are called to be peacemakers. Given this foundation of hope and peace, joy is inevitable and my friends, joy is not a thing but a person – Jesus Christ. Let us commit to sharing the joy of Christ to lighten someone’s heart this Advent season. Joy leads us to love, love of God, love of neighbour and love of self. In keeping with these thoughts are the words of Mother Teresa who reminds us that, “love is a fruit in season at all times, and within reach of every hand.”

We are called this Advent more so than ever to be the positive difference for the person who is most in need of a strong dosage of hope, peace, joy and love. Indeed, it is an opportunity for us to unmask our charitable nature and place it on full display for those who are desperately in need of a saving grace. This would facilitate us taking pride in the fact that we are the instruments assisting in ushering the hope, peace, joy and love of Christ into our land one person at a time. It is then and only then, that in a few short weeks we will earn the right to reverberate with full-throated voice “Joy to the Word, the Lord has come.”