



## ***1<sup>st</sup> SUNDAY of ADVENT*** ***YEAR C – December 2, 2018***

In order to preach the good news in any meaningful way, there is a constant need to translate the Bible in a way that people can understand it. That's why King James had the Bible translated from the original Hebrew and Greek into English for the use of English-speaking Christians. In today's Gospel we see how St. Luke translates

Jesus' teaching on the Last Days in order to make it meaningful and relevant to the readers of his time.

Today's Gospel (Luke 21:25-28, 34-36) is taken from Luke, whereas most of our gospel readings since November last year came from St. Mark's Gospel. This 1st Sunday of Advent, marks the beginning of a new liturgical year. Today we move from the year of Mark (B) to the year of Luke (C). In fact, today's gospel is Luke's version of the gospel we read two weeks ago from Mark.

Comparing Mark 13:24-32 and Luke 21:25ff which we read today, we see that Luke has left out all the spectacular sky events that Mark associated with the Last Days: "the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven" (12:24f). Luke rewrites this with more restraint: "There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars" (21:25). Again, Luke leaves out altogether Mark's idea that the Son of Man "will send out his angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven"

Why does Luke leave out these easily observable and verifiable forecasts in Mark? For one thing, Luke knew better. Mark wrote his gospel sometime before the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70. In his days Jewish Christians had supposed that the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple would coincide with the end of the world. But the fall of Jerusalem came and went and the world did not end. So Luke, writing about the year AD 80 had the advantage of hindsight which Mark did not have.

Advent is a time to prepare for the coming of our Lord. Generally, we understand this to be for his coming at Christmas, not his coming at the end of the world.

Luke reminds us of another coming of Jesus which we tend to forget sometimes, namely, his daily coming in the ordinary events and the ordinary people in our lives. Luke's emphasis is that we should be vigilant to recognize and welcome the Lord who comes to us every day in people, in places and in events when we least expect it.

We don't have to wait for Jesus to come on Christmas day or at the end of the world. The whole point is that Jesus will come to us today, and tomorrow and every day. We need to recognize him when he is in our midst. That means we must change some things about ourselves. Advent is the time to do that.

Change is not always easy. For a few moments in silence, reflect on the things you can and should change. Do you have the courage to change them as you get ready for Christmas.

