



Homily 1st Sunday of Advent

Advent is a season observed in the Church as a time of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus. Advent comes from the Latin word *adventus*, which means *coming*. The Aramaic word is *maranatha*, which means *the Lord (Maran) is coming (natha)*.

Meaning of Advent wreath:

Circle symbolizes eternity of God.

Green wreath symbolizes Life everlasting.

Candle light symbolizes Jesus, the light of the world.

Four candles symbolize the four weeks of Advent.

1st purple candle is called candle of prayer and hope.

2nd purple candle is called candle of peace.

3rd pink candle is called candle of joy.

4th purple candle is called candle of love.

Purple color foreshadows the royalty of Jesus who is being awaited. For Advent, purple is not a sign of suffering and mourning as in Lent. Pink color symbolizes joy.

Three Arms of Advent:

Prayer: There are four intensive weeks of prayer for divine visitation. During the four weeks we, prayerfully, invite Jesus more intently into every aspects of our life.

Penance: In one way or another we all involve ourselves in the physical preparation of Christmas. In the same way, also, we need to be involved in the spiritual preparation of the divine visitation. Just like we have a Christmas party, we will also have a Penitential service. As the second reading advises us, "Let us throw off the works of and put on the armor of light; let us conduct ourselves properly as in the day..."

Charity: Each of us needs to undertake works of charity that can bring hope, peace, joy and love in the life of others.

These three Arms of Advent summarize the spirit and spirituality of Christmas.

Fr Martin Eke, MSP