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Advent

Monday, December 3
Isaiah 63:16-17, 19; 64:2-7
Psalm 124:1-24

Tuesday, December 4
Isaiah 63:16-17, 19; 64:2-7
Psalm 124:1-24

Wednesday, December 5
Isaiah 63:16-17, 19; 64:2-7
Psalm 124:1-24

Thursday, December 6
Isaiah 63:16-17, 19; 64:2-7
Psalm 124:1-24

Friday, December 7
Isaiah 63:16-17, 19; 64:2-7
Psalm 124:1-24

Be watchful during Advent

1st Sunday of Advent (December 1): (R3) Mark 13:33-37; (R1) Isaiah 63:16-17, 19; 64:2-7; (R2) 1 Corinthians 1:3-9.

In next Sunday's Gospel Jesus says: "What I say to you, I say to all: 'Watch!'"

Advent is a season for watching. Children watch for Santa, but the Gospel says we adults ought to be watching for Christ's return.

Advent invites us to watch for Christ's return by bearing witness in our daily lives to him by receiving the sacraments and living the truth of the Gospel.

Sue Monk Kidd's little daughter got the dubious part of being the Bethlehem star in a Christmas play. After her first rehearsal, she burst through the door with her costume, a five-pointed star lined in shiny gold tinsel designed to drape over her like a sandwich board. "What exactly will you be doing in the play?" her mother asked. "I just stand there and shine," her daughter answered. Sue never forgot that answer.

Jesus' disciples were concerned about the future and their part in it. Jesus wanted them to know that their role was to stay behind and "Let your light ... shine before men ..." He told them they would not be alone, but he would be with them giving them the power they needed to teach and live the Gospel.

There is a story about Saint Francis of Assisi that illustrates this very well. One winter night, there was a raging blizzard, and the man who was supposed to wake up every couple of hours and keep the fire going at the monastery was unable to find Francis. So he went outside into the storm and found Francis kneeling at



Father Albert Shamon

A word for Sunday

the side of a hill wearing his ordinary clothing. His arms were outstretched; he was praying, oblivious to the howling wind and biting cold snow. A day later, when the man asked Francis how he could stand this, he replied, "God warms my heart when I keep my eyes fixed on him."

Likewise God warms our hearts, too, when we keep our eyes fixed on him. There are times when, from our perspective, things appear as if they will never change. However, from God's perspective, all things are working together for our good and God's glory. All we need do is place our trust in him. His strength will flow into us and empower us to live to fight another day.

As we have already said, Advent is a season for watching. Children watch for Santa. We ought to watch for Christ's return.

There's an infinite difference between Santa and God. Santa loves kids when they are good. God loves us even when we are sinners. Some unknown author wrote "Why Jesus Is Better Than Santa Claus":

Santa lives at the North Pole. Jesus is everywhere.

Santa comes but once a year. Jesus is an ever-present help.

Santa fills your stockings with goodies. Jesus supplies all your needs.

Santa comes down your chimney uninvited. Jesus stands at your door and knocks, and then enters your heart.

You have to wait in line to see Santa. Jesus is as close as the mention of his name.

Santa doesn't know your name, all he can say is "Hi, little boy or girl, what's your name?" Jesus knew our name before we did. Not only does he know our name, he knows our address, too. He knows our history and future and he even knows how many hairs are on our heads.

Santa says, "You better not cry." Jesus says "Cast all your cares on me for I have care for you."

Santa's little helpers make toys. Jesus makes new lives, mends wounded hearts, repairs broken homes and builds mansions.

Santa puts gifts under your tree, but Jesus died on a tree to give us eternal life.

Jesus is even better than Santa, so watch joyfully for him. Put him back into Christmas, for he is still the reason for the season.

Father Shamon is administrator of St. Isaac Jogues Chapel, Fleming.

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Elmo's World: Happy Holidays
December 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31
WXXI TV 22, 41, 57, AM 57, or Classic 41

Barney's Christmas Star
December 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31
WXXI TV 22, 41, 57, AM 57, or Classic 41

VeggieTales: The Star of Christmas
December 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31
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