

Advent Sunday, Year B

Isaiah 64: 1-9
Psalm 80
1 Corinthians 1: 3-9
Luke 2: 22-40

Longing,
Pleading
o come
Heaven meeting earth
Exchange

What is this thing that is coming?

Theos, Divine

How do we recognise it?
Light is just about the best way. Light to lighten the dark corners, to flush out the dirt.
Let there be light – not overcome

Lantern of Christ will bleach them. Demons that are enemies of our good selves only so fighting are we adult fruitful happy (von Hügel). All life, according to [von Hügel] consists in a patient struggle with irreconcilables—a progressive unifying of parts that will never fit perfectly.

These enemies within are more dangerous than any external enemy because they inhibit my goodness within, often through guilt. I must love these enemies, love my demons.

Renewals require assessment of where you are

- self examination
- searingly honest
- hard work

Church – renewal. Examine every organisation of the church to ask how is it furthering the work of Christ. If we find it is simply existing for the comfort of a few, we should consider how it needs to be altered.

All this is a new start, a tidy up

Be alert, watch

'Be sober, be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith.' We now have the power to be watchful and resist the assaults of Satan. Watching is not just for Advent.

ADVENT, and thus the church year, begins with a cry, "O", as we hear an impatient Isaiah wanting God to go on something of a rampage, "O that you would rend the heavens and come down." Advent invites us to express our yearning for something to happen that is beyond our power to do anything about, except to desire it.

We make this cry for God to come among us, not because we are longing for deliverance from this world, but for God's glory to be revealed in this world, in the time of this mortal life. There is a "now and not yet" dimension to the prayer that God's Kingdom will come on earth as it is in heaven. The basic ache for God to act transcends the years, and is as potent today in our world of injustice, oppression, and suffering as it was when the exiles prayed centuries ago.

O rend the heavens

Jesus dispels any idea that we can twiddle our thumbs while we wait "Give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and put on the armour of light."

God rends, God strengthens; we cast away, and we put on.

Destroys to rebuild. Hindu Kali.