

Meméto



THE PRIESTLY FRATERNITY OF ST. PETER

ADVENT ISSUE
DECEMBER 2021

Laudetur Jesus Christus!

We can pray that the events occurring in the world and Church today serve at least to induce Catholics to take the holy season of Advent more seriously. This beautiful season is an oft-neglected one, but God offers us particular graces through its observance. Advent serves to focus our attention on Our Lord's coming—a coming that is really three-fold. Holy Mother Church would have us consider Our Lord's first coming on Christmas Night in Bethlehem more than two thousand years ago, His coming now through grace and the sacraments into the souls of the just, and His Second Coming at the end of time to judge the living and the dead. The famous liturgist, Fr. Pius Parsch, shows how the Advent Matins Hymn, prayed by priests, religious, and increasingly more laity throughout this holy season, presents all of these:¹

Hymn *Verbum supernum, prodiens*

*Our Lord's First
Coming:*

Celestial Word, proceeding from
The Eternal Father's breast,
in the end of ages come
To aid a world distressed:

*His Coming in
Grace:*

Enlighten, Lord, and set on fire
Our spirits with Thy love,
That, dead to earth, they may aspire
And live to joys above.

His Second Coming:

That, when the judgment-seat on high
Shall fix the sinner's doom,
And to the just a glad voice cry,
Come to your destined home;
Safe from the black and yawning lake
Of restless, endless pain,
We may the Face of God partake,
The bliss of Heaven attain.

May we take advantage of this grace-filled season to re-commit ourselves to daily prayer, especially Our Lady's Rosary, and to offer some voluntary penance for the Church and the world. May we especially lift up our thoughts and focus to the Eternal Reality beyond this world and joyfully "make straight the way of the Lord" in our own lives. ✝

Dr. William Lawrence, FSSP

Fr. William Lawrence, FSSP
North American Provincial

*Grant us, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that the coming
feast of our redemption may bring us both aid for our
present life, and the reward of everlasting happiness.*

—Collect from Ember Wednesday in Advent

¹ Parsch, Pius. *The Church's Year of Grace*. Vol. I. Translated by William Heidt, OSB. Collegeville, The Liturgical Press, 1953, p. 15. The translation of *Verbum supernum prodiens* is by Bld. John Henry Newman.

A Priest Forever



Giving Tuesday November 30, 2021

Your local FSSP priests are working harder than ever. They're celebrating more Masses. They've extended their hours for confession. They're bringing the sacraments to seriously ill Catholics in hospitals. They're recording sermons and posting them online for Catholics who are starved for spiritual guidance. They're processing stacks of parishioner registration forms and researching ways to expand the seating at their parishes.

But they're not complaining. Rather, our priests consider it a privilege to bring Jesus to you. Each of our priests in the North American Province aims to spend his entire life taking care of your spiritual needs. Will you show your gratitude by reassuring our priests that you'll help take care of their physical needs for as long as they live?

Please Support the FSSP's "Priest Forever" Fund on Giving Tuesday

The FSSP is still a community of predominantly young priests. But as time goes by, we'll have more and more priests who aren't actively engaged in the activities of our apostolates.

There are three reasons for this:

Even young communities get old. The FSSP is celebrating its thirty-third anniversary this year. It won't be long before we see a significant number of our priests near retirement age.

Moreover, a few older priests have also joined our ranks. They all deserve to know that we'll take care of their housing, medical care, and other necessities. Meanwhile, the many priests we've ordained over the past couple of decades will soon reach a stage of life at which medical costs can increase exponentially.

Some priests will experience serious medical problems. For reasons only God can understand, sometimes He allows His faithful workers to undergo medical hardships that require costly care. For example, in 2016, a long-time FSSP priest experienced a severe hemorrhagic stroke, the effects of which left him unable to celebrate Mass again. Due to needing constant medical attention, he spent his final years in a care home, offering his sufferings for the FSSP. It was a blessing to provide for his every need—but as the FSSP grows and the proportion of aging priests increases, such situations create new obligations that must be met with our dedicated support.

As the North American Province expands, we'll need more priests to work outside of parish life for the benefit of the Fraternity itself. There are certain decisions within a priestly community that can only be made by priests—decisions about the health of individual apostolates as well as our entire community. **Opening more apostolates and expanding our current apostolates will require more oversight and support from our North American headquarters.**

In response, the FSSP has established the Priest Forever Fund. This fund aims to provide for the physical needs of FSSP priests even when they are not assigned to an apostolate. With this fund, we can thank our hardworking priests for making a total gift of their lives.

This year on Giving Tuesday, the FSSP aims to raise \$200,000 for the Priest Forever Fund—enough to make a substantial investment in the long-term well-being of our priests. Here’s how you can help.

Please Make Your Gift on November 30

As you probably know, Giving Tuesday is an annual online event in which nonprofits of all kinds seek to raise money on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving. This year’s Giving Tuesday will be on November 30, 2021.

Your gifts on Giving Tuesday will support the overall good of FSSP priests—whether they’re working in apostolates, assigned to other duties, retired, or on medical leave. You’ll help us continue to establish new apostolates and staff them with hardworking priests. You’ll give those priests assurance that just as they have always been there to meet your spiritual needs, you will always be here to care for their physical needs.

Making your donation of any size takes just seconds online. As a special thanks to all who support us, we’ll enter donors into a drawing to win one of several FSSP-branded gifts.



Gifts of \$133 and above will be entered in a drawing for chances to win gifts like these.

In honor of our 33rd anniversary, all gifts at **\$1,533** and above will receive a brand-new 4-pack of FSSP-branded craft beer glasses, and those above **\$733** will receive a copy of our *Vade Mecum* prayer book. Also, givers of **\$133** or more will have a chance to win special FSSP gifts like rosaries, stained glass, magnets, calendars, and holy water bottles. The more milestones we hit, the more we will give away.



Vade Mecum
Prayer Book
\$733 gift

Check your email, social media accounts, and the *Missive* for reminders as Giving Tuesday approaches. You can also visit the site now at:

fssp.com/giving-tuesday

We’re always humbled by your generosity, and we thank you for your friendship and support. With your help, the FSSP will continue to form priests for life. ✝



Craft Beer Glass Set
(4 glasses, 1 each style)
\$1,533 gift

T U E S S A C E R D O S
I N A E T E R N U M

To participate in Giving Tuesday, visit:

fssp.com/giving-tuesday



THE ADVENTS OF THE LORD

Dr. David Arias
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The liturgical season of Advent is a time during which, by God's grace, we prepare ourselves for the Lord's coming. A sign that this is true is that the English word "Advent" is connected etymologically with the Latin verb *advenire* meaning "to come to" or "to arrive." And, of course, the Church's liturgical prayers and readings during Advent are replete with references to the coming of Christ. For example, the Collect from the First Sunday of Advent reads: "Rouse up Your power, O Lord, and come (*veni*), so that we may deserve to be rescued from the impending dangers of our sins by Your protection, and saved by Your deliverance."

Now, since God the Son's incarnation and nativity occurred more than twenty centuries ago, we might ask: Is the Church teaching us that, during Advent, we are somehow to prepare ourselves for a coming of the Lord which has already historically happened? Or, rather, are we supposed to prepare ourselves for a coming of the Lord which has not yet occurred?

One way to answer these queries involves clearly distinguishing two comings or "advents" of God the Son, namely, His first coming in His incarnation and nativity, and His coming again at the end of the world. With this distinction in mind, one could then say that during Advent we are to focus on the first coming of God the Son, which has already historically happened, so as to prepare ourselves, by the grace of God, for His coming to judge the living and the dead which has not yet occurred. This answer would encourage us, then, to contemplate the first coming of God the Son so as to cultivate within our souls the hope which we express at the end of the Nicene Creed: "*Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum, et vitam venturi saeculi.*"

Does this way of answering the question have any basis in the Church's Advent Liturgy? It certainly does. To find such a

basis, we need not look any further than the Gospel reading from the First Sunday of Advent. It is taken from Luke 21, which in part reads: "At that time Jesus said to His disciples: 'There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, by reason of the confusion of the roaring of the sea and of the waves: men withering away for fear and expectation of what shall come upon the whole world. For the powers of heaven shall be moved. And then they shall see the Son of man coming (*venientem*) on a cloud with great power and majesty.'" Since this is clearly a description of God the Son coming again to

judge the living and the dead, it seems true to say that during Advent we should have two advents of God the Son in mind, and that the contemplation of the one which has already happened should help to prepare us for the one which has not yet occurred.

True as the initial answer to the above queries is, it remains incomplete and unnuanced. An indication that this answer is unnuanced is that it cannot give a satisfactory account of the presence in the Advent liturgy of prayers and Old

Testament texts wherein the Church expresses a longing for the coming of the Lord which is clearly prior to His coming at the end of the world. For example, the Introit of the Mass for Christmas Eve reads: "This day you shall know that the Lord will come (*veniet*), and save us, and in the morning you shall see His glory."

Commenting on how properly to understand such prayers and Old Testament texts, Fr. Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalene writes, "[The first coming of God the Son] was expected for long ages; it was foretold by the prophets, and desired by all the just who were not granted to see its dawn. The Church commemorates and renews this expectation with each recurring Advent, expressing this longing to the Savior who is to

"the contemplation of the [Advent] which has already happened should help to prepare us for the one which has not yet occurred."



come.” At the same time there is an important distinction between the desire which the Old Testament Patriarchs had for the coming of God the Son, and the desire for His coming again, even prior to the end of the world, which is expressed by the Church in her Advent liturgy. Again, Fr. Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalene assists us here: “The desire of old was sustained solely by hope, but it is now a confident desire, founded on the consoling reality of the Redemption already accomplished.”

But are there really other comings or “advents” of God the Son’s between His Incarnation and nativity, on the one hand, and His final coming to judge the living and the dead, on the other hand? There are, indeed, and it is precisely because there are many such advents of Christ that the initial answer given above is woefully incomplete. Once more, Fr. Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalene offers some sagacious words: “The

spirit of the Advent liturgy, commemorating the age-long expectation of the Redeemer, will prepare us to celebrate the mystery of the Word made Flesh by arousing in each one of us an intimate, personal expectation of the renewed coming of Christ to our soul. This coming is accomplished by grace; to the degree in which it develops and matures in us, it becomes more copious, more penetrating, until it transforms the soul into an *alter Christus*.” In other words, it is because of God’s grace working in us through our participation in the Advent liturgy that we enter more deeply into the mystery of the Incarnate Word Himself and, consequently, experience in ourselves a “renewed coming of Christ to our soul.” May we all strive, by the grace of God, to be transformed by these advents of God the Son, both this Advent and every Advent, until each of can truly say with St. Paul, “it is no longer I who lives, but Christ Who lives in me” (Gal. 2:20). ✝

At that time, Jesus said to his disciples, “There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth the nations will be anguished at the sound of the sea and the waves of upheaval; men will dry up with fear in the expectation of what is to happen to the whole earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then we will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds with great power and great majesty. When it begins to arrive, straighten up and lift up your head, for your redemption is coming.” And he told them a parable, “See the fig tree and all the trees: when they make their fruit appear, you know that the summer is near. So for you: when you see this happen, know that the Kingdom of God is near. Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass that all this has happened. Heaven and earth will pass, but my words will not pass.”

Our Lord and Redeemer, dear brothers, wish to be ready. So he announces to us the misfortunes that must accompany the old age of the world, to distance us from the love of this world. He tells us what great calamities are immediately preceding the end, so that, if we do not want to fear God when we are quiet, we feared at least, under the repeated blows of these calamities, the approach of his judgment. For a little before the passage of the Holy Gospel that your fraternity has just heard, the Lord said in a manner of premise: “The nations will stand against the nations, and the kingdoms against the kingdoms; there will be great earthquakes, plagues and famines in various places” (Lk 21: 10-11). And a few sentences later, he adds what you have just heard: “There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on earth the nations will be anguished at the sound of the sea and the waves of upheaval.”

Of all these predictions, we see some already realized; as for the others, we dread to see them soon to be fulfilled. That the nations stand up against the nations, that they be oppressed with anguish on the earth, we observe it more in our time than we read in the books. That an earthquake has ruined innumerable cities, you know how often we have

heard it from other parts of the world. Epidemics, we suffer constantly. As for the signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, it is true that we have not yet seen them, but the troubles in the atmosphere already allow us to suppose that these signs are not far off. Moreover, before Italy was delivered to the blows of barbarian swords, we saw in the sky armies all on fire and, in a blaze, the blood of the human race, which was spread afterwards. An incredible upheaval of the sea and the waves has not yet occurred. But since many predictions

have already been realized, there is no doubt that the small number of those who remain will be followed, because past facts guarantee the fulfillment of those to come.

If we tell you this, dear brothers, it is to keep your minds in a careful prudence and vigilance, lest security numbs them, and ignorance keeps them languid; it is also so that fear continually stimulates your minds, and that such stimulant strengthens them in good works, at the thought of those words added by the voice of our Redeemer: “Men will dry up with fear in the world, in the expectation of what is to happen to the whole earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.” Who does the Lord call the powers of heaven, except Angels, Archangels, Thrones, Dominations, Principalities, and

powers? They will appear visibly in our eyes at the coming of the rigorous Judge, to make us then pay with severity what our invisible Creator now supports us without getting impatient. It is added here, “Then shall the Son of Man come upon the clouds with great power and great majesty.” It is as if it were plainly said, “They shall see in power and majesty that they did not want to listen when he presented himself with humility, so that they will then feel all the more the rigor of his power that they do not now bow the nape of their hearts to his patience.”

But these words having been spoken to the reprobate, the following are addressed to the elect to comfort them: “When it shall begin to come, straighten up and lift up your head, for



St. Gregory processing to end the Roman plague of 590.

your redemption is coming” is as if the Truth clearly warned his chosen ones by saying: “At the moment when the misfortunes of the world are multiplying and the shaking of the celestial powers announces the terror of the judgment, raise your head, that is to say, rejoice in your hearts; indeed, while the world ends, of which you are not friends, the redemption you desired approaches.” In Holy Scripture, the word *head* is often put in the place of the word *spirit*, for just as members are commanded by the head, so thoughts are ruled by the mind. To lift one’s head is to raise one’s spirit towards the joys of the heavenly country. Thus, those who love God are invited to rejoice with great joy because of the end of the world, because they will soon meet the one they love, while passing what they did not like. May the faithful who desires to see God be careful not to cry over the misfortunes that afflict the world, since he knows that these very misfortunes bring him to an end. It is written in fact: “*Whoever wants to be the friend of this century is the enemy of God*” (Jas 4: 4). He who does not rejoice at the approach of the end of the world affirms himself as the friend of the world, and is thereby convinced of being the enemy of God. May it not be so with the hearts of the faithful. That it is not so with those who believe by faith in the existence of another life, and show by their way of acting that they love this other life. For crying over the destruction of the world is

fitting for those who have planted the roots of their hearts in the love of the world, who do not seek the future life, and do not even suspect its existence. But we, who know the eternal joys of the heavenly homeland, must rush to them in haste. We must wish to go there as quickly as possible and to reach it by the shortest way.

Of what evils, indeed, is the world not oppressed? What sorrows and adversities are we not anxious about? And what is life mortal, if not a journey? But what madness, think well, my brothers, that exhausting yourself in the fatigues of travel without wanting yet such a trip to end! To show us that the world must be trampled upon and despised, our Redeemer immediately adds an ingenious comparison: “*See the fig tree and all the trees: when they make their fruits appear, you know that summer is near. So for you: when you see this happen, know that the Kingdom of God is near.*” It is as if he clearly said, “If we know the proximity of summer by the fruits of trees, we can likewise recognize by the ruin of the world that the Kingdom of God is near.” These words show us clearly that the fruit of the world is its ruin: it grows only to fall; he buds only to destroy by calamities everything that has burgeoned in him. It is with reason that the Kingdom of God is compared to summer, for then the clouds of our sadness will pass, and the days of life will shine with the brightness of the eternal Sun. ✚

Christmas Novena of Masses

Enroll yourself and your loved ones today!

Send the gift of grace this Christmas by enrolling your loved ones and friends in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and enjoy our beautiful and reverent set of cards. Once enrolled, your loved ones and friends will be remembered in FSSP Masses during December 17th - 25th. Enroll online at:

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A New FSSP Christmas Album

Sancta Nox: Christmas Matins from Bavaria by the Seminarians of Saint Peter Wigratzbad brings you a taste of heaven, with the peaceful sounds of Christmas Matins through Gregorian Chant and polyphonic gems. Also included is an ethereal rendition of a multi-lingual Silent Night. Reminiscent of the chanting monks of old, the choir of the Seminarians of Saint Peter Wigratzbad recorded this music in the historic St. Magnus Abbey of Bad Schussenried, built in the 12th century.



Available at www.fraternitypublications.com.

QCD REMINDER: 2021 IS ENDING SOON

If you have an IRA and are 70½ or older, a Qualified Charitable Distribution is both easy to execute and a great way to help the FSSP – but gifts must be completed by December 31st!

QCD gifts go direct from your IRA to the Fraternity and are not reported to you as income – this can provide valuable tax benefits for donors who do not itemize their deductions. If you are 72 or older, a QCD can also satisfy part or all of your Required Minimum Distribution.

For more information Planned Gifts such as QCD's, Charitable Gift Annuities, and gifting appreciated Stocks & Securities, please contact our Director of Planned Giving, Joe Gardner, at jgardner@fssp.com or 570-319-5271.

Ordo and Calendar Orders

Please note that as of 2020, FSSP headquarters no longer processes orders for FSSP Ordos or Calendars. Please do not send your orders to us. All orders for FSSP publications should be sent to Sophia Institute Press, who is handling our order fulfillment for us. Their contact info is as follows:

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www.fraternitypublications.com

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As supply chain disruptions are becoming more common, print publications may potentially be facing some rough roads ahead due to postal delays and paper shortages. We know how many of you enjoy your newsletter subscription, so we are trying to prepare as best we can and keep each issue landing on time to your mailbox. But in case these events do catch up with us, did you know there are other ways to read *Meménto*? You can find both the latest issue and our monthly priest prayer card online:

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