



FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

FIRST READING: Isaiah 2:1-5

A reading from Isaiah.

¹The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

²In days to come

the mountain of the LORD's house
shall be established as the highest of the mountains
and shall be raised above the hills;
all the nations shall stream to it.

³Many peoples shall come and say,
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
to the house of the God of Jacob,
that he may teach us his ways
and that we may walk in his paths."

For out of Zion shall go forth instruction
and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

⁴He shall judge between the nations
and shall arbitrate for many peoples;
they shall beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation;
neither shall they learn war any more.

⁵O house of Jacob,
come, let us walk
in the light of the LORD!

Word of God, word of life. or The word of the Lord.

PSALMODY: Psalm 122

FIRST READING *Isaiah = eye-ZAY-uh Amoz = AY-moz*

Verse 1 is a headline. A significant pause before the beginning of verse 2 will help to make that clear. The mountain image is a vision of grandeur. See the majesty of the mountain in your mind and help the hearer to see it in the sound of your description. Another substantial pause following verse 4 will set up the invitation to journey in the light of the LORD offered in verse 5.

SECOND READING: Romans 13:11-14

A reading from Romans.

¹¹Besides this,
you know what time it is,
how it is already the moment for you to wake from sleep.
For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers;
¹²the night is far gone; the day is near.

Let us then throw off the works of darkness
and put on the armor of light;
¹³let us walk decently as in the day,
not in reveling and drunkenness,
not in illicit sex and licentiousness,
not in quarreling and jealousy.

¹⁴Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and make no provision for the flesh,
to gratify its desires.

Word of God, word of life. *or* The word of the Lord.

SECOND READING *licentiousness = ly-SEN-chus-ness*

There is a sense of urgency that is central to the reading. Help the hearer feel it. Now is the moment. The day is near. Additionally, note that the image of living or walking in the light makes an apparent connection to the first reading. Make certain that the hearer can sense that connection.

GOSPEL: Matthew 24:36-44

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

「Jesus said to the disciples,」

³⁶“About that day and hour no one knows,
neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son,
but only the Father.

³⁷For as the days of Noah were,
so will be the coming of the Son of Man.

³⁸For as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking,
marrying and giving in marriage,
until the day Noah entered the ark,

³⁹and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away,
so, too, will be the coming of the Son of Man.

⁴⁰“Then two will be in the field;
one will be taken, and one will be left.

⁴¹Two women will be grinding meal together;
one will be taken, and one will be left.

⁴²Keep awake, therefore,
for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.

⁴³But understand this:
if the owner of the house had known
in what part of the night the thief was coming,
he would have stayed awake
and would not have let his house be broken into.

⁴⁴“Therefore you also must be ready,
for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

The gospel of the Lord.

GOSPEL

“Be ready” is the clear thrust of the text, but the images are mixed and will require a little effort on the part of the assembly to absorb. Verses 38-39 are one long sentence; use the commas to good effect. The hearer will be helped by a reading that is deliberately paced. Provide plenty of breathing room between paragraphs.