

90 Seconds
with the Weekly Gospel

Sundays
on the
Go

YEAR C

ALBERT HAASE, OFM



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Sundays on the Go: 90 Seconds with the Weekly Gospel, Year C

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INTRODUCTION

My first assignment as a newly ordained priest was on the pastoral staff at St. Peter's Church located in Chicago's business district commonly called "the Loop." In the early '80s, it was a hub of spiritual activity, with fourteen daily Masses and confessions from 6:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

With so many daily Masses that virtually doubled on Holy Days of Obligation, the presider was always challenged to keep the homily short and to the point. Thanks to that first year of ministry, I developed the habit of preaching brief, and hopefully direct, daily homilies.

"Father Albert," Valerie recently told me, "I love catching Jesus on the run with you. Why don't you turn your pithy homilies into a book?"

Sundays on the Go: 90 Seconds with the Weekly Gospel, Years A, B, C are offered in that spirit. I have a short reflection, prayer, and reflection question for each Sunday's Gospel. I have deliberately limited myself to 170–180 words. Though occasionally offering comments on the

meaning of the feast, most reflections focus on the Gospel.

In preparation for attending the Sunday Eucharist, I invite you to read the Gospel. Then read the reflection and the prayer, and conclude with the reflection question. That question can be used during the week to help you stay in touch with Sunday's Gospel.

As we journey together during Year C of the liturgical cycle, I hope we all are blessed by meeting Jesus on the go.

Albert Haase, OFM

Sunday of the Word of God

 ADVENT

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

(LUKE 21:25–28, 34–36)

*The Moment We've Been
Waiting For*

Today's Gospel highlights the calamitous and cataclysmic signs in the heavens, on earth, and among nations that the early Christians believed would occur when the Son of Man comes "in a cloud with power and great glory." These events will be so intense and awful that people will die of fright. But this is the very moment for which the disciples have been waiting. Because it is the moment of redemption, they should "stand erect and raise [their] heads." As contemporary disciples, we never have reason to fear the moment of Jesus's return. The Second Coming is the culmination of all history, and its hope should fuel our hearts with vigilance and fidelity.

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Pray

Lord Jesus,

Our hearts can be heavy with fears and worries as we ponder the end of our lives or the world.

Grace us with joyful anticipation of that moment when salvation history is fulfilled, and you bless us with eternal life in your presence.

Amen.

Ponder

What fears do I have when I think of my own death or the end of the world?



SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
(LUKE 3:1–6)

A Surprising Revelation

In today's Gospel, the evangelist is giving us more than the exact historical moment when John the Baptist emerged in the desert. He's also making a startling claim about God. Tiberius Caesar, the most powerful man in the Roman Empire, did not receive the word of God; nor did Pontius Pilate, known to be a ruthless and greedy prefect, or the tetrarchs Herod, Philip, and Lysanias. Annas and Caiaphas, the high priests who alone could enter the Holy of Holies in the Temple, did not receive the word of God. Unique among the first three Gospel writers, Luke highlights that the preaching of John was the direct result of a call from God, thus making him a prophet. God deliberately overlooked the

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

powerful and the pious and chose a person on the periphery.

Pray

Loving God,

You choose the most unlikely of people and call them to be prophets.

Open our hearts to accept and nurture this call, if given.

Open our eyes to discover the prophets among us.

Amen.

Ponder

Who has been a surprising prophet in my life?



THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
(LUKE 3:10–18)

Your Path to Holiness

Hearing John's "good news," people wanted to know how to respond. When the crowds asked, John called them to a life of charity and sharing with those who are needy. You would have expected him to tell the tax collectors, considered public sinners, to change their occupation. He didn't—he called them to do their job with fairness and integrity. Roman soldiers also wanted to respond. Rather than telling them to get discharged, John called them to stop the bullying for which they were known and to stop accepting bribes. Today's Gospel reminds us that every occupation can be a path to holiness when it is practiced with a tender heart of love and compassion.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Pray

Saint John the Baptist,
You did not require people to change
their careers or lines of work to prepare
for the message of Jesus.

Rather, you challenged them to
live their roles and occupations with
sensitive, compassionate hearts.

May we do the same.

Amen.

Ponder

How am I called to be a saint in my
present role or career?



FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
(LUKE 1:39-45)

Urgent News

I couldn't wait to tell you: I'm engaged!" "I just had to pick up the phone and call. It's a boy!" Some news can't wait to be told. It needs to be blurted out. In today's Gospel, Mary traveled "in haste" to her cousin Elizabeth's home in Judah. Perhaps she wanted to share the news of her pregnancy. Perhaps she wanted to verify the truth of the angel Gabriel's words that her elderly cousin was now with child. The passage, unique in the Gospels with two pregnant women presented as the central characters, is electric with the joy and excitement of emerging new life. That new life will be announced by Elizabeth's child and incarnated in Mary's son.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Pray

Loving God,
Elizabeth and Mary played pivotal roles
in the history of salvation.

The wonder and thrill of their
pregnancies needed to be shared and
shouted.

May all of us believe, celebrate, and
proclaim “that what was spoken to [us]
by the Lord would be fulfilled.”

Amen.

Ponder

What recent good news was I eager to
share and shout?