

## ADVENT week one 2023

Advent is the time in the Church's calendar when we are encouraged to take stock of our lives

To look and see if there is need for a different approach

If there is reason for joy and celebration

If there is a need for a change of direction

So often circumstance can dictate what we do.

Ill health determining how we spend our time.

Subconsciously choosing busy lives to hide from real needs

Hours spent watching pointless TV

There is very much beauty in your lives

There are people who love you.

Who depend upon your simple presence

Not for what you give

but for what you are

Sadly I see this most profoundly when interviewing families

in the preparation for funerals

We attempt to see beyond the blindness of familiarity

I ask what made this person happy

What was important to the deceased

What adventures or challenges did they take on

How did they approach crisis.

We try to move beyond cliché

Not just that they loved.

But what was it about family that they loved

What is it about family that you love to work with

What actually creates happiness for you

What do you consider to be important in your day to day existence

Do you ever take on a challenge

Do you choose or are you dragged along

How does crisis affect you.

It is so much easier to answer questions about someone else

Different stages of life bring in different challenges

You are not the same person you were twenty years ago

Thirty years ago

Each age brings with it new challenges

Old age perhaps the greatest challenge of all

So there is need for regular review

Sometimes this has dramatic conclusions

More often than not, gentle and simple

You can choose to ignore the changes and induce the heart attack

Or you can ask

What have you done recently to improve your happiness, or are you simply drifting

What was the most important event you were involved in last week

What adventures or challenges did you take on

What did you choose to allow to pass you by.

How did you deal with a disappointment, with frustration

Our Lord Jesus Christ walks with you  
Sometimes sharing the cross and Calvary  
Sometimes emerging from the tomb and confusing the Apostles

It does not matter  
However be it as mundane as running a bath  
Or facing the toils of illness  
Our Lord Jesus Christ walks with you

But are you aware,  
or sleep walking from one event to another

There is so very much beauty in your lives  
There are people who love you.  
Who depend upon your simple presence  
Not for what you give  
but for what you are

Use the four weeks of Advent  
Consciously think, consider, look beyond the ordinary, the cliché  
Keep a diary of five events a day  
List two people who mean so much to you with four reasons, each day  
Do some exercise. Get out!  
Find silence and do not be afraid of what you hear.

Our Lord Jesus Christ walks with you  
Does he find you awake, or asleep.  
Does he find you awake, or asleep.