

Fr. Romeo Evangelista Homily
Sunday, November 30, 2025
First Sunday of Advent
Cycle A

Many of us have lived through this nightmare: you *swore* you set the alarm for 4:00 a.m. because you had something important – an exam, a flight, a job interview, a family trip. But somehow... it never rang. You wake up, see the sunlight, and that sinking feeling hits you like a punch to the stomach. Your heart races. You panic. You rush. And no matter how much you try to fix it, you cannot shake off that awful, helpless feeling of oversleeping.

If physical oversleeping can make us panic, spiritual oversleeping can make us miss the very coming of the Lord who wants to meet us, bless us, and renew us. Advent is the alarm God sets for our soul – reminding us to rise, be alert, and open our hearts before the Light arrives. We all know the shock of realizing, “I should have gotten up earlier.”

And so today, at the very beginning of Advent, St. Paul stands beside our beds, so to speak, and shakes our shoulders gently but firmly. “Wake up,” he says. “The Lord is near.” In the second reading, Paul tells us: “It is the hour now for you to awake from sleep, the night is advanced, the day is at hand.” And then he adds this powerful invitation: “*Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the desires of the flesh.*”

The whole reading is an Advent alarm clock. Why is Paul so urgent? Because *“the Lord is near.”* God is drawing close in our daily lives, in the small invitations to grace, in the quiet promptings of conscience, in the opportunities to love. The Advent message, then, is: **“Wake up!”** Wake up from indifference... Wake up from the routine that numbs the soul... Wake up from distractions that steal our attention from God. Wake up, because Christ is passing by – today.

If we are honest, we can recognize parts of our lives where we have dozed off. Maybe prayer has become mechanical and Mass has become routine. Maybe our hope has dimmed because of life’s struggles. Maybe we have allowed the noise of the world to drown out the whisper of God. But Advent says: “It’s not too late. It’s not hopeless.” “The Lord is near. Christ is not far.” “He is already walking toward us. We only need to open our eyes and rise to meet Him.”

As we enter Advent, think again of that morning alarm clock. It rings not to punish us, but to guide us – to help us rise for something important. “It is the hour now to awake from sleep. The day is at hand. Put on the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Advent is a new beginning, a fresh dawn, a sacred moment to start again. So let us rise – awake, alert, and ready – and walk into the light of the Lord, for he is near.