

*Why the fuss about Advent?*

For most of us Americans the four weeks before Christmas are a frenzy of shopping, decorating, and holiday parties. “After all.” We say, “This is the holiday season.” WHAT!?!? For us Catholics, the Christmas celebration starts with Christmas. The weeks before Christmas are advent.

Secular commerce has stolen our holy Advent season. Advent is a time of preparation for our holy celebration of Christ-Mass. Even *Christmas seals* steals our season for a secular project and refuses to show a Christian scene on its seals.

Well, enough about the false Advent. What about the real thing? In our parish Bible study we’ve been talking about how the whole Bible story, from creation into the New Testament is one long preparation for the coming of Jesus. In Advent we put ourselves into this story. The story is not finished. Jesus founded a Church, by which we continue this story today. It will not end until all God’s holy people are safe in His Kingdom forever. As we re-experience the past we prepare for this future. Our age of fulfillment started with the birth of the promised Messiah, Jesus. Jesus is the call, guide, strength and destination of our journey. Meeting Him in an ever deepening way takes preparation.

Most anything we do successfully in life takes preparation. We study for years for our careers. We practice for sports events. Deer hunters typically spend the month before the season busily repairing blinds, baiting, target practice, etc. How much more important it must be to get ourselves ready to meet Jesus anew both at Christmas and When He comes again on the clouds of heaven. Isn’t the fuss about Advent worthwhile?

