

ADVENT SUNDAY WAITING IN HOPE

STARTER: Describe a time when you found waiting very difficult. *(In pairs for 5 minutes)*

READING Luke 21 v. 25--36

Allow time for everyone to re-read for themselves and reflect on the personal focus questions, allowing the opportunity for the scripture to resonate in their own experience of faith. Then share together in threes the result of your individual reflection)

COMMENTARY: During Advent we remember Jesus' coming at the first Christmas and we are getting ready for this year's Christmas. But Jesus' first coming really looks forward to His final coming at the end. The early Christians thought that this would happen in their lifetime. The gospel writers wanted to make it clear that Jesus never promised this. But, Luke wants his church community and ours to wait with expectation and hope. His gospel begins with God's message to key people not to be afraid. At the predictions of the end of the world, Jesus encourages people not to be afraid. The Son of Man will come to transform the world. (Baranowski)

PERSONAL FOCUS QUESTIONS

- 1 In the hustle and bustle of everyday life what are the things that scare you?
- 2 Who, or what, gave you courage to go on when things seemed to be falling apart [v.28]?
- 3 What do you think you have to do in order that the 'Son of Man will be pleased with you' [v.36]?
- 4 What responsibilities do you have to this planet to ensure life continues?



LIFE FOCUS: *(Discuss in whole group-15 minutes)*

- 1 How can we best support others who are going through the "No-man's land" of waiting?
- 2 What should we say to the people who say that current world events show that the end of the world is near [v31]?

REVIEW TIME: What have we to report on concerning action we have taken as a result of previous meetings together? Are there any steps we could take individually or as a group to implement our vision arising from this week's sharing?

PRAYER TIME Perhaps pray for those who find periods of waiting long and difficult; those whose lives are empty and lonely; those who work at great cost to bring in God's Kingdom of peace and justice and frequently stand alone.