



30 November 2008

Dear Parishioners,

In her poem “Sometimes” Mary Oliver writes:

**Instructions for living a life:  
Pay attention.  
Be astonished.  
Tell about it.**

In the Gospel on this 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent, Jesus instructs the disciples similarly when he says:

**Be watchful! Be alert!  
May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping.**

Often, we can make our way through life inattentive to what’s going on around and within our lives. We can be so asleep to what matters. And Advent is meant to be a wake-up call. The scriptures and this very season instruct us to begin “living a life” that pays attention: a life astonished and alive like a small boy named Mac I know when he was given a piece of licorice by his mother the other day as the family gathered together following the funeral of his great-grandmother. The joy on his face astonished me. That small child made me see what matters within the frenetic pace of life.

Not only are we to pay attention and be astonished, we are to “Tell about it” by living life with greater presence, greater hope, greater surrender to the grace within that longs to bring to birth in us a life that is instructive: that keeps alive the teaching of Jesus in ways that give the small worlds in which we live reason to hope.

May Advent and its message instruct us. May we wake up in ways that make us more alive to Christ. Let Advent be much more than shopping days before Christmas.

*Father Tim Clark*