

# FR. BRAD HAGELIN

## PASTOR

My dear Kirkland Catholics,

The word Advent comes from the Latin *adventus* which means “coming.” Referring to *Christ’s* coming of course. The theological virtue that corresponds with Advent is hope. Indeed, hope is the very central theme of Advent. Mark Searle reflected:

“Human beings cannot live without hope. Unlike the animals, we are blessed – or cursed – with the ability to think about future and to fear our actions to shaping it. So essential is this to human life, that human beings cannot live without hope, without something to live for, without something to look forward to. To be without hope, to have nothing to live for, is surrender to death in despair.” (“The Spirit of Advent,” *Assembly* Volume 7:1 ©Notre Dame Center for Liturgy)

We can definitely hope for things that are *not* good things: that those who have wronged us “get what’s coming to them,” etc. We can put a lot of energy and hope into things that *may or may not* be good or possible: that my child plays a division one sport, or that I might win the lotto. We can also hope for things that are *certainly* good but are not likely attainable: that world hunger is completely eradicated. Putting energy into these hopes usually bears bad fruit in our lives.

But for Christians the Lord Jesus is our only hope, and the only one who will not disappoint us. I find however, that many people become angry with God for not doing something that He never promised in the first place; like sparing us pain, conflict, suffering and difficulty. It is important to recognize what God has actually promised us, and to frankly acknowledge the constant battle of good and evil both in the world and also in ourselves. Jesus needs to be allowed to be victorious in us during this life, and will be victorious in the world in the end. He is the constant source of grace and is right with us in each of our battles. He is never outdone in generosity. May this Advent season become a time of *properly placed* hope: may our longing for salvation to take root more deeply in our hearts as we prepare for the Christmas season.

With love in Christ,

Fr. Brad