First Sunday of Advent, Year B
Gathering the Elect



Let us pray...

Stir up your power, O Lord, and come, that by your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by your mighty deliverance; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. (*Gregorian Sacramentary*, 6th Century)

— First Reading, Isaiah 64:1–9 —

We have been in our sins for a long time. Then, when least expected—nor could we have expected it—God did something awesome and immense in scope. He acted for those who wait for him in hope of forgiveness. He did not wait for us to act or for us to somehow make ourselves perfect and holy. No one has ever imagined a God who meets with his people, while they are still sinners (Matthew 9:10; Romans 5:8).

Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down...

Isaiah 64:1

— Psalm 80 —

God does not remain angry with his people forever. He will yet smile upon us and restore us. Ultimately, we will spend eternity in the light of his beatific countenance. On that day, he will save us from ourselves—from our sin—and the laughter of our enemies will cease.

— Second Reading, 1 Corinthians 1:3–9 —

As we await the coming of the Lord, he has equipped us with every gift needed to sustain us in our faithful expectancy. God is so faithful in this regard, that he will even keep us guiltless on the great day of his appearing. In our own imaginations, we might think we are sinners who will not be able to stand on that great and awesome day. However, we do not stand on our own; we stand because God stands us up (Romans 14:4). We are made holy through Christ's holiness (Jeremiah 23:6, 33:16; Romans 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 3:9; Colossians 1:21–22; Hebrews 10:10). Therefore, we are kept guiltless by this free gift of grace that God provides.

— The Gospel, Mark 13:24–37 —

No one knows the day of Christ's returning. Jesus said that even he did not know when he would return. So, we should not be concerned with times and dates. Instead, our interest should be the same as Jesus' business (Luke 2:49). Until he does return, we should be alert and wakeful, doing the work of the gospel.

God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Corinthians 1:9

— The Common Thread —

We are restored and saved in a most important way. God has come down in his Christ and saved us. This is that awesome deed that we could never have expected of him. But he does not stop there; he enriches us with good gifts to be used to bear fruit for his kingdom until he returns. He sustains us until that Day when he comes in the clouds with great power and glory to gather us with all the elect—all those who have been saved by the Father's will. This is his word to us, so we must be on guard, watching for his return.

Unscramble the verses:

Ouy ohw aer teehodrnn

npou eth bmcihure,

ihsne hrfto.

Sotrree su, o ogd;

tel uyor ecaf snieh

atth ew yma eb devsa.

Gathering the Elect

Find the 31 ***bold*** *words from Mark 13:24–27 KJV.*

S R Z N A W C N A P H N O X H
H V B T O H Z N O R Z E S D T
A A R A C I G F D T V V E M R
K F A L L E T E N O S A N A A
E K G O L N N A S M W E D G E
N E H S L E A N L R T H G I L
B E U L K P P M V U A T N V G
R V A R G S M O O N B T U E N
R H A L D L C T W T A I S Y I
S D H U G S O G C E R W R S M
Z O O X G R Y R L E R A D T O
R L R E H T A G Y S L S P R C
C W I N D S X S P O W E R U I
W T S O M R E T T U D R C O O
U H E A V E N L S V O L P F T

But in those days, after that **tribulation**, the **sun** shall be **darkened**, and the **moon** shall **not give her light**, And the **stars** of **heaven shall fall**, and the **powers** that are in heaven shall be **shaken**. And then shall they **see** the **Son** of **man coming** in the **clouds** with great **power** and **glory**. And then shall he **send** his **angels**, and shall **gather** together his **elect** from the **four winds**, from the **uttermost part** of the **earth** to the uttermost part of **heaven**.