



Archdiocese of Philadelphia
Office of the Cardinal
222 North 17th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103-1299

November 30, 2008

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

May the grace and peace of the Lord Jesus be with you!

The simple admonition of the Lord Jesus in the Gospel reading for the first Sunday of Advent is both sobering and, at the same time, hopeful: “What I say to you, I say to all: ‘Watch!’” (Mark 13:37).

The words of Jesus call us to a greater fidelity as we await his return in glory to be the judge of the living and dead. These words proclaimed to us during the holy season of Advent also point us to the celebration of His birth and to the reality that He is continually brought to birth in the hearts of all those who believe in Him.

As we strive to be faithful to the command of the Lord and to be vigilant, we are aware of those things which can distract us and keep us from fulfilling His will in our lives. I encourage you to use these days of prayerful preparation to deepen your love for the Lord Jesus and to make an ever greater offering of your hearts to him so that they might be purified of all that prevents us from living in joy as his disciples.

Sincerely in Christ,

+Justin Card. Rigali

Cardinal Justin Rigali
Archbishop of Philadelphia

[Please communicate this letter in an appropriate manner to the faithful on the weekend of November 29-30, 2008]