

First Sunday Advent Year A 2022

Matthew 24:37-44

Jesus said to his disciples: 'As it was in Noah's day, so will it be when the Son of Man comes. For in those days before the Flood people were eating, drinking, taking wives, taking husbands, right up to the day Noah went into the ark, and they suspected nothing till the Flood came and swept all away. It will be like this when the Son of Man comes. Then of two men in the fields one is taken, one left; of two women at the millstone grinding, one is taken, one left.

'So stay awake, because you do not know the day when your master is coming. You may be quite sure of this that if the householder had known at what time of the night the burglar would come, he would have stayed awake and would not have allowed anyone to break through the wall of his house. Therefore, you too must stand ready because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.



Reflection

Christmas begins earlier every year in our secular world. Many shops and businesses compete to have the first and the biggest display of Christmas lights and decorations. Advertisements for Christmas toys commence in early October. People are texting Christmas greetings before the end of November and children are taken to visit Santa Claus early in December. Therefore, it is not surprising that some

people feel that Christmas is an anticlimax because it has ended almost before it has begun.

In the Christian context however, and especially in the liturgical year, Christmas does not begin until 25 December and it is preceded by several weeks of waiting and preparation during the season of Advent. Our Christian focus in Advent is on waiting in hope for the fulfilment of God's promise to send the Messiah and on preparing for the Second Coming of Christ on the Last Day when all the nations will be assembled before him.

Advent is not just about preparing to commemorate the birth of the baby Jesus. Crucially, it is a time of spiritual preparation for welcoming Christ into our lives at Christmas, but also a time of preparation for the last judgement. Basically, during Advent the Church invites us not to be lured into a false sense of Christmas that is unrelated to the real meaning of Christmas, which is the Incarnation, that is, God becoming human in the person of Jesus, and to Christ's Second Coming.

Jesus told his disciples: 'You too must stand ready because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect' (Mt 24:44). He says the same to each one of us. In doing so, he exhorts us to make this particular Advent the beginning of a lifelong Advent — a lifetime of waiting in Christian hope for the Lord's Second Coming, whenever that will be, while undergoing conversion from sin to living in God's presence.

For meditation

Stay awake, because you do not know the day when your master is coming. (Mt 24:42)

