

# *First Sunday of Advent*

Today's Gospel refers to the second coming of Jesus. Jesus gives many examples of what it will be like for people to experience this second coming. Whether man or woman eating or drinking working or sleeping the second coming will be at a time when no one expects Just as a thief in the night. And yes, we should live our lives as if judgement day is at hand. But perhaps there is another message embedded in Jesus' message. What if today was your last day? What if your next meal was your last? How would you prefer to live the final hours of your life? Would you make it count? Or would you let this opportunity slip between your fingers in favor of the next accomplishment or an opportunity to get revenge?

Jesus wants us to live our life by His example. Jesus demonstrated for us through His words and actions that He loved all people even those who hated Him. He encourages us to develop a closer relationship with our Heavenly Father, i.e., Abba. He wants us to have real knowledge of Him and what he was really telling us. The story within the story. He wants us to realize that while we may not all have lots of earthly possessions our knowledge and relationship with God is something we can have forever. Jesus tells us to be patient, kind, humble, and obedient. It has been said that loving like Jesus is the best way to live. (This is the best gift we can give ourselves!) Like Jesus we should not only see our loved ones as people we should see them as beings needing love.

One could conclude that today's Gospel is not just addressing our need to be prepared for Jesus' second coming but also giving us a sense of urgency to do so. For many fortunate people, life is a "relatively" long road. A timeline that stretches over a foreseeable horizon. Many probably tell themselves its ok to live for the moment believing that reconciliation can take place sometime in the future - ostensibly when we've had our fill of fun and feast. Jesus tells us otherwise in Matthew 24. He tells us to be ready now! Do not wait! Take heed. Pray for forgiveness. Go to Confession. Help someone. Tell someone you love them. Give forgiveness to someone else that perhaps you have been denying. Or, ask for forgiveness from someone we were too selfish or scared to ask for previously. What's even more important? Don't wait until you talk yourself out of it for any variety of reasons. Ask yourself what would Jesus do and do it now!

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