

1st Sunday of Advent A

*You know "the time" has come:
you must wake up now. (Rm 13:11)*



First Reading

Isaiah 2:1-5

The vision of Isaiah son of Amoz, concerning Judah and Jerusalem. In the days to come the mountain of the Temple of the Lord shall tower above the mountains and be lifted higher than the hills. All the nations will stream to it, peoples without number will come to it; and they will say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the Temple of the God of Jacob that he may teach us his ways so that we may walk in his paths; since the Law will go out from Zion, and the oracle of the Lord from Jerusalem." He will wield authority over the nations and adjudicate between many peoples; these will hammer their swords into ploughshares, their spears into sickles. Nation will not lift sword against nation, there will be no more training for war. O House of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord.

Second Reading

Romans 13:11-14

You know "the time" has come: you must wake up now: our salvation is even nearer than it was when we were converted. The night is almost over, it will be daylight soon – let us give up all the things we prefer to do under cover of the dark; let us arm ourselves and appear in the light. Let us live decently as people do in the daytime: no drunken orgies, no promiscuity or licentiousness, and no wrangling or jealousy. Let your armour be the Lord Jesus Christ; forget about satisfying your bodies with all their cravings.

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."

Meditation

Advent is a brief period of time which prepares Christians for the celebration of Christmas. Let us listen to Paul's warning, "It is now the hour for you to wake from sleep, for our salvation is closer than when we first accepted the faith. The night is far spent, the day draws near." Indeed, since the resurrection of Jesus, the life of people and society has made an irresistible change of course which rushes them toward their final end and judgment. We must decide for humanity and use all our energy to discover our future with God. The gospel of this Sunday puts us on the watch. It insists that we not be in a state of unreadiness and carelessness, that we not have a false sense of security in regard to the unforeseeable coming of the Son of Man. In the days of Noah, the people were overconfident in themselves and continued with the business at hand. Then, suddenly, came the disaster: they were taken by surprise in their sleep, unconcerned with what was essential.

The image of the Lord coming as a thief in the night expresses the necessity of constant vigilance. "Here I stand, knocking at the door" (Rv 3:20). In every age of history, the Church is in danger of failing to hear him who knocks at the door. He is there to awaken Christians to the call of the Spirit.

Today, more than ever, the Church and all Christians must play the prophetic role of confronting a sleeping world which risks losing its soul. We should live so as not to be surprised by the judgment at the end of our lives and at the end of the world.