

First Sunday of Advent 2020

My beloved brothers and sisters, this parable from the Gospel was addressed to the Jewish leadership, but it was also addressed to the new and emerging leadership of the Church. In this sense, the parable is a warning to each age, until the Lord shall return in the Parousia, in His Glory.

In the original Greek of the Gospel, the word that Jesus uses is an unusual verbal form in English. It would best be translated: "Be wakeful!" It is a command that is continual. Another way of translating it would be: be alert! The context of the Gospel parable was the upheaval that the people of God were experiencing in that particular time. That is the Reason why Jesus taught: "Neither I, nor the angels in heaven knows, but only the Father knows..." The factors that led up to the fall of Israel before the Roman armies, were already in place, but would only unfold in fullness in the year 70 A.D.; however, the point is, they did take place.

On the other hand, the parable of Jesus is a continual warning to us all throughout the ages: Jesus has Ascended to the right hand of the Father, and the Church is now awaiting His return in glory as the Glorious King who will finally destroy evil and death forever. Jesus tells us to be constantly alert, so that when that moment occurs, we will be ready to open our lives to Him, not in terror, but in welcome!

There is a great lesson here for us today: the Jewish people were swept away by the Roman armies, because they considered only human solutions to their problems. Their leadership did not want to stir things up by accepting Jesus as the promised Messiah. God will not force His way into our lives; but there are terrible consequences when we refuse to open up the door to the rightful master. There are so, so many who have shut the doors of their hearts to the Divine Master, our very society has shut the door to the Divine Master. When we do so, we cut ourselves off from the flow of Grace; we deprive ourselves of His Divine company by casting ourselves into the darkness.

Advent is the time that God has given us through His church, to open the doors of our hearts, once again, to the Divine Master, to make ourselves ready to receive

Him with Joy and not with dread. Advent is the time to humbly recognize that only the Divine Master can straighten out the profound mess we have made of our world, and only He can restore the light of our lives. Advent is the time to restore the Throne of Grace that is His in our Hearts, so that when He comes, whether at the end of our lives, or at the end of time, He will gladly greet us and assume His throne in our hearts. Advent is the time to make ready and smooth the pathway into the home of our hearts and lives the way of the King. We do this by asking God for the Grace of true repentance, sorrow for our sins, confession and returning to lives of substantial prayer, especially the Rosary, and the Mass. Wake up! Make way for the King!