

FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Brothers and Sisters



So too, you must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come.'

The 'Son of Man,' a title taken from the Book of Daniel, means Jesus. Advent invites us to be prepared for the coming of the Son of Man. Jesus arrives at an hour we do not expect.

The Belgian Jesuit, Ignace de La Potterie, wrote a book about the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus in Gospel of John, called 'The Hour of Jesus.'

The Gospels refer to this hour, e.g., at the Wedding at Cana: 'My hour has not yet come,' and at the betrayal of Judas, 'knowing that the hour had come for him to give glory to his Father.'

Jesus' whole life is in function of this hour. Everything he does leads to this moment. Nothing he does is disconnected from it. The hour of Jesus, says de La Potterie, is the Cross. The Crucifixion, in John's Gospel, is a glorification, a triumph, a victory, full of light and splendor.

Christ comes to us in the hour of the cross. His Adventus is located there. But this happens at an hour we do not expect. The final Adventus will be at the hour of our death. When will that be? We do not know for certain; it may be when we are 95yrs old, or 75, or 68, or 52, 42, 18 or.... There is a date written in Heaven for each of us, and today we are one step closer to it than we were yesterday.

It is the only thing that we can be mathematically certain of. More certain than we will have lunch today, or go to work tomorrow, or have Christmas dinner - those things may or may not happen. But the fact that one night, or day, at a specific hour, our present life will come to an end, is an absolute certainty.

Another certainty, which Advent points towards, is that Christ comes to us every day; not only at the moment of our physical death, but in the cross we experience every day. A cross will arrive for you today, maybe at 9am, or 11:30am, or half past two in the afternoon, or teatime or midnight. Do not live sleeping, oblivious. Be awake, anticipate the coming of Christ in the daily cross.

For those who are asleep, not prepared, the arrival of the cross is a harbinger of anger, bitterness, sadness, resentment, violence, or dejection. But for those who are prepared, awake, the cross becomes an experience of light, joy, and gladness. It is the bed of love, where the Lord espouses us.

What does it mean to be prepared? Each one must answer that question themselves. Advent asks this question of us. How will you respond? If you are uncertain, there will be an answer awaiting you in the Liturgy today.

Fr. Sean