

Sunday 1st (B) of Advent

Gospel text (Mk 13,33-37): Jesus said to his disciples: «Be alert and watch, for you don't know when the time will come. When a man goes abroad and leaves his home, he puts his servants in charge, giving to each one some responsibility; and he orders the doorkeeper to stay awake. So stay awake, for you don't know when the Lord of the house will come, in the evening or at midnight, when the cock crows or before dawn. If He comes suddenly, do not let him catch you asleep. And what I say to you, I say to all: watch».

«Be alert and watch, for you don't know when the time will come»

Fr. Antoni CAROL i Hostench
(Sant Cugat del Vallès, Barcelona, Spain)

Today, in this first Sunday of Advent, the Church begins a new liturgic year. We are, therefore, entering some very especial days of foretaste, renewal and readying.

Jesus warns us that «you don't know when the time will come» (Mk 13:33). Yes, in our life there will be a decisive moment. But, when will it be? We do not know. The Lord did not even want to reveal us when the time would come for the end of the world.

So, all this takes us towards an attitude of exasperation and conscientiousness: «If He comes suddenly, do not let him catch you asleep» (Mk 13:36). Time in this life is time of deliverance, of maturing our capacity to love; it is not a time of diversion. It is a time of “betrothal”, of preparation for our “wedding” time in afterlife, in communion with God and all the saints.

Yet, life is but a constant starting and restarting. The fact remains that we have to go through some definitive moments: perhaps, every day, every hour and every minute may become a crucial moment. Many or a few, but—in short— days, hours and minutes: it is here, on a concrete time, when the Lord is waiting for us. «In our life, in the life of Christians, our first conversion—that unique moment which each of us remembers, when we clearly understood everything the Lord was asking of us— is certainly very significant. But the later conversions are even more important,

and they are increasingly demanding» (St. Josemaria).

In this liturgical time we are to get ready for the great “advent”: the coming of Our Master. “Christmas”, “Nativitas”: it would be great if each day of our existence could be a “nativity” to a life of love! Perhaps, making of our life a permanent “Nativity” might be the best way to stay awake. Saint Mary, Our Mother, watch over us!