

1st Sunday in Advent

“Stay Awake”

Matthew 24:37–44

When Jesus says, “Stay awake,” He is not warning us about a date on the calendar. He is pleading with us about the condition of our souls. The greatest tragedy of the Catholic life is not doing something terribly wrong—it is doing nothing at all. It is drifting. It is postponing holiness until “later,” while life quietly slips through our fingers. In our Gospel, the people in Noah’s day weren’t criminals or monsters. They were ordinary people who kept telling themselves, “I’ll pay attention to God tomorrow.” But tomorrow never came.

Advent stands before us today like a spiritual alarm clock, and Jesus is pressing the button Himself, saying: “Wake up. You still have time. But don’t waste it.” This season is not passive. It is not sentimental. It is not about waiting in a rocking chair for something to happen. It is an urgent invitation to move, to act, to choose. Because if we do not intentionally turn toward God, we will unintentionally drift away from Him.

So today, the Lord is asking us for something real—something concrete. First: choose to put God back at the centre. Not when Advent is over. Not when Christmas slows down. Not after the shopping is done. Now... tonight. Shift one thing in your schedule that tells the Lord, “You come first always.”

Second: repair one broken relationship. Jesus says two people will be together in the field, and one will be taken. He is reminding us that not everyone is guaranteed another conversation. Do not let pride keep you from healing what is broken. Forgive first. Apologize first. Call first. The first move is the holiest move.

Third: trade distraction for prayer. We cannot stay awake if our souls are buried under noise. Turn off something this week—an app, a TV show, a habit—and replace it with ten quiet minutes with Christ. Ten minutes of real listening can change the direction of a life.

Fourth: love someone who does not expect it. Christ will come “at an hour you do not expect.” So, mirror Him: do something beautiful for someone who does not see it coming. A visit. A meal. A handwritten note. A kindness that interrupts despair. When you surprise someone with love, you are making visible the God who surprises the world with His coming.

My friends, Advent is the Church grabbing us by the shoulders, looking us in the eyes, and saying: “You were made for more than survival. You were made for mission.” Jesus is not asking us simply to admire the idea of His coming; He is asking us to live like it matters today.

So, this Advent, let us not settle for decorations, routines, or resolutions. Let us dare to act—to reorder our lives, to rekindle relationships, to reclaim prayer, to rewrite someone’s story with unexpected love. Because Christ is not far away. He is already on the doorstep. And when He knocks, may He find us not only awake, but faithful and prepared—ready for Him to take His rightful place at the centre of our lives.