29 November 2026

First Sunday of Advent
Be prepared for the Return of Christ

Today, once again, we will reflect on the readings for the First Sunday of Advent according to the traditional calendar.

Rom 13:11-14a

Besides, you know the time has come; the moment is here for you to stop sleeping and wake up, because by now our salvation is nearer than when we first began to believe. The night is nearly over, daylight is on the way; so let us throw off everything that belongs to the darkness and equip ourselves for the light. Let us live decently, as in the light of day; with no orgies or drunkenness, no promiscuity or licentiousness, and no wrangling or jealousy. Let your armour be the Lord Jesus Christ, and stop worrying about how your disordered natural inclinations may be fulfilled.

At the beginning of the new Liturgical Year, the biblical texts prepare us for the Return of the Lord. Although no one but the Father knows the day or the hour (cf. Mt 24:36), we must be prepared.

Human history does not end in nothingness, nor is its end uncertain; rather, it is in God's hands. The Lord has not left us in the dark about what is to come. Faith gives us hope and also the certainty that the loving God, who created and redeemed us, calls us to be close to Him for all eternity. Thus, we are invited to trust in the Lord, both in the time of our earthly life and in what awaits us after death. This trust in our loving Father teaches us to understand all the events of our life in the light of God, including those that would frighten us were it not for the fact that the Lord Himself gives us the key to their understanding.

It is from this same perspective that we should reflect on today's biblical readings. Both the first reading and the Gospel (Lk 21:25–33) call us to be vigilant in the face of the Lord's imminent return. St. Paul exhorts us to shake off our spiritual slumber, which blinds us to the situation in which humanity finds itself in God's eyes. However, the

End of Time—just like the hour of our own death—can come as suddenly as a thief in the night.

It is easy to fall into this spiritual drowsiness of which we speak here, when one does not pay attention to the signs of the times and does not live in that spiritual vigilance to which Sacred Scripture exhorts us again and again.

The announced Return of Christ, the Last Judgment, death, the danger of losing our life and having to be eternally separated from God... All these are not threats that should frighten us, but realities that should help us to be vigilant. Our life must be consciously focused on our ultimate goal, to fight and get rid of everything that binds us improperly to this life and, consequently, numbs us spiritually. If in evangelization the dimension of the "afterlife"-that is, the ultimate reality-is omitted, then men will be deceived and will continue in their lethargy, thus losing the great orientation of life.

Our God is a God of infinite love; this is certain and true! But it is part of His love to draw our attention to the consequences of a life in sin and to warn us. What father would not warn his son if he were going astray? What teacher in the Church could justify to God the omission of not having spoken clearly about the ultimate realities to the faithful entrusted to him?

St. Paul exhorts his own to put off the works of darkness and to put on the armor of light. These are the two movements that following Christ requires: on the one hand, to reject the darkness in us and around us; and, on the other hand, to clothe ourselves with the light of the Lord. Both movements are important!

For the first, self-knowledge is fundamental. Without fear or false shame, we must also learn to know our wrong attitudes and the darkness of our heart. The Apostle warns the Roman community, *"As in the fullness of day, let us proceed with dignity: no eating and drunkenness; no lust and wantonness; no rivalry and envy."*

Certainly St. Paul could have expanded the list of those things that keep people in darkness and thus in spiritual lethargy. For us, it is not pleasant to discover our shadow sides, and we are certainly tempted to overlook them or not to want to take a good look at them.

But this is neither helpful nor wise, because our "evil heart" will not be transformed if we simply close our eyes to our shadows. If we overlook them, our religiosity is in danger of becoming artificial and lacks a healthy spiritual realism. Moreover, this attitude is foolish, since sooner or later we will still have to be purified in order to enter the Kingdom of God. All that we advance in this life in relation to our purification, both our active cooperation and what we allow the Holy Spirit to work, will make us grow in love and will be a benefit for the people with whom we live.

The other movement is that of "putting on the Lord Jesus," which means the transformation into Christ, which the Holy Spirit grants us with our cooperation, so that we may become perfect like the Heavenly Father (cf. Mt 5:48).

Therefore, in order to be prepared for the Lord's return and to acquire the necessary vigilance, we must walk the path of holiness and also pay attention to the signs of the times that precede the Second Coming of Christ.

Reflection on the Daily Reading in the Novus Ordo:
https://en.elijamission.net/you-lord-are-our-father/