

Fr. Albert Shamon



Word for Sunday

Too Busy For the Lord

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Mt. 24:37-44, (R1) Is. 2:1-5, (R2) Rom. 13:11-14.

During Advent the liturgy begins with the invitation: "Come, let us climb the Lord's mountain" (R1). The Lord's mountain is the Church. St. Matthew writes that Jesus gave His greatest sermon on a mountain. So the Advent liturgy invites us to climb the Lord's mountain — that is, listen to the Church — so that He, the Son of God, "may instruct us in his ways and we may walk in his paths" (R1). If we do, we shall have peace with each other and peace between nations. Swords shall be beaten into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks — and the peace on earth that angels sang of on the first Christmas shall become a reality.

However both St. Paul and Jesus warn us of two dangers regarding this invitation.

Paul is concerned that we may spurn it because of laziness or sleepiness. Like a mother awakening her kids for school who have overslept, Paul says, "Hurry up! Get up! Get dressed.

You'll be late. You'll miss the bus! It is now the hour for you to wake from sleep. The night is spent. It's almost daylight" (R2). This Advent means we are one year closer to the second coming of Christ than we were last Advent.

And Jesus warns us that this coming will be unexpected — like a thief in the night. Probably our blessed Lord was referring to a robbery that had made the headlines in His day — a daring break-in that was the talk of the town. "If the owner of the house knew when the thief was coming he would keep a watchful eye and not allow his house to be broken into. You must be prepared the same way" (R3).

Paul describes what that preparation ought to be — namely, living honorably as in daylight. In the daylight, when people can see and hear us, we are generally very careful, are we not? So Paul urges us to live like that, aware that God sees and hears us. If we do, we will be ready when Jesus, the good thief, comes again to claim His own.

The opposite of laziness is busyness, being too busy. This is the danger about which Jesus warns us in the gospel: we may spurn the invitation because we are too busy.

Jesus alludes to the Flood

in Noah's time. The people were busy, then, doing the things people ordinarily do: marrying, eating and drinking, enjoying life. That was all right. What was wrong is that this was all they did! They failed to take God into account. He had no room in their lives.

Jesus further underscored the same point by referring to the work-a-day world: two men working in a field, and two women working in a home. Both men and women were busy. That was all right. But one in each group was too busy — too busy to take God into consideration. Only one in each group paid attention to God. One was taken to heaven, but one was left out. You have to work; but you also have to live the gospel!

- Too busy to laugh, too busy to play,
- Too busy to loaf, for even a day;
- Too busy to smile or walk a mile,
- Too busy to see that beautiful tree
- Or gaze a while at the open sea.
- From friend and foe, all they know — "I'm too busy!"
- Too much hurry, too-much rush,
- No time to listen to the song of the thrush.
- Too busy to live, too busy to love,
- Too busy to ever look above;
- At last at the Gate I can hear Peter say: "You're too busy, please go away."
- If I let you in you wouldn't stay! — You're too busy!"



Photos by John Dash

New Sight

When Andres Pattinos, center, last summer fled from Cuba to the U.S. in search of freedom and work, he found in addition perhaps an equally precious thing: sight. Blind in one eye for five years, blind in the other eye for the past year, Pattinos was operated on by Dr. Gullapalli Rao of Park Ridge Hospital, during which

surgery the refugee's sight was restored. Last week Pattinos received new glasses prescribed to correct vision deficiencies the surgery could not. Charles Fischer of Waldert Opticians, left, speaks to Pattinos through the interpretation of Dr. Marcello Weiss, head of the Cuban Lyceum. Fischer then adjusts Pattinos' new frames,

donated by Waldert's, after which Pattinos takes a reading test, during which it is discovered that he can read even the smallest print on the test card. Pattinos came to Rochester under theegis of the Cuban/Haitian Emergency Relief Fund, an effort in which the diocese was a participant.



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