

- In life do you find yourself preparing to welcomed a welcomed visitor or do you find yourself preparing for the worst – somebody wanting to seal from you?

**“Therefore, you too must stand ready because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.**

- Do you experience this statement as a threat or as an invitation?
- How do you cope with the unexpected in life?
- Does your disposition for life put you in a good space to see and to notice what is unfolding in your life?

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#### **Hoping**

**What do I want to say to the Lord in light of what you have shared or because of what others have shared?**

The Gospel always leads us to places of hope, possibility and new beginnings. It awakens us to where and what we should be grateful for. It leads us to where God is waiting and inviting us to grow in freedom, in inner peace and maturity as a disciple. What prayer is in your heart as you draw to a close in this period of prayer?

- For the ability to hear what is being said to me.
- For a preparedness for what life will unfold for me.
- For the capacity to see God in the ordinary bits and pieces of life.
- For the gift of awareness.
- For the ability to allow myself to be taken from my work so as to invest time with God and loved ones.
- For the ability to act on what I know to be true.
- For the openness needed to welcome the Son of Man into my life
- For a sensitivity to the inbreaking of God in my life.
- For the stature to stand tall in my faith.

## **PRAYING WITH THE SUNDAY GOSPEL**

**1<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT – YEAR A**

**MATTHEW 24:37-44**

**“THE SON OF MAN IS COMING AT AN HOUR YOU DO NOT EXPECT”**

**Jesus said to his disciples: ‘As it was in Noah’s day, so will it be when the Son of Man comes. For in those days before the Flood people were eating, drinking, taking wives, taking husbands, right up to the day Noah went into the ark, and they suspected nothing till the Flood came and swept all away. It will be like this when the Son of Man comes. Then of two men in the fields one is taken, one left; of two women at the millstone grinding, one is taken, one left.**

**‘So stay awake, because you do not know the day when your master is coming. You may be quite sure of this, that if the householder had known at what time of the night the burglar would come, he would have stayed awake and would not have allowed anyone to break through the wall of his house. Therefore, you too must stand ready because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.**

## **Hearing!**

### **"Speak Lord your servants are listening"**

*Slowly read the Gospel passage; listening carefully to the story.*

*Read it intentionally, so as to perceive the small details we can miss on an initial reading. These small details might be the bridge between the Gospel Story and the story of your life.*

- What phrase or word resonated with you in your reading of this text?

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## **Happening**

**Through the lens of the Gospel we now look with compassion at the story of our lives**

*Having listened to the text of the Gospel now let it speak to the text of your life story. Become aware of where this Gospel story is already alive in your life or in your community. Or maybe you notice where it is absent in your life? Where might this Gospel story be inviting life and hope into aspects of your life that long for resurrection and new life?*

**"Jesus said to his disciples: 'As it was in Noah's day, so will it be when the Son of Man comes.'"**

- What is Jesus saying to you as a disciple in this moment of prayer?
- What is enabling and disabling your awareness as to what is unfolding in your life today?
- Have you an expectant eye, one that might notice the inbreaking of God in your day?

**"For in those days before the Flood people were eating, drinking, taking wives, taking husbands, right up to the day Noah went into the ark, and they suspected nothing till the Flood came and swept all away."**

- How distracted are you by the everyday tasks of life?
- Does the mundane in life blind you to the mystery of God inbreaking into your lived experience?

- Have you any sense that the very things you are investing yourself in, might in fact be passing?

**"It will be like this when the Son of Man comes."**

- How aware are you of the inbreaking of God in your life?
- Have you ever found yourself surprised or taken unawares by the sudden awareness of God's presence in your life?

**"Then of two men in the fields one is taken, one left; of two women at the millstone grinding, one is taken, one left."**

- Will the inbreaking of God be enough to separate you from what you are doing today?
- What hold has your job or your activities on you?
- How open are you to the invitation of God in your life?
- Can you allow yourself be taken from your work for the sake of your relationship with God or with others?

**"So stay awake, because you do not know the day when your master is coming."**

- Is there a part of your life or your relationships that longs for your attention?
- Is it possible that you are sleep walking through aspects of your life, or your faith?
- Where might you be caught napping or sleep walking in your life?

**"You may be quite sure of this, that if the householder had known at what time of the night the burglar would come, he would have stayed awake and would not have allowed anyone to break through the wall of his house."**

- Now that you have been tipped off to the impending arrival of God in your life – what difference might it make?
- Might you have locked the door or your heart and forgotten to open it?