

First Sunday of Advent, November 30, 2025

I came upon an interesting poem by the Polish poet Czeslaw Milosz and wanted to share a little excerpt from that poem. The poem is called *On the Day the World Ends*.

On the day the world ends
Women walk through the fields under their umbrellas,
A drunkard grows sleepy at the edge of a lawn,
Vegetable peddlers shout in the street
And a yellow-sailed boat comes nearer the island,
The voice of a violin lasts in the air
And leads into a starry night.
And those who expected lightning and thunder
Are disappointed.
And those who expected signs and archangels' trumps
Do not believe it is happening now.
As long as the sun and the moon are above,
As long as the bumblebee visits a rose,
As long as rosy infants are born
No one believes it is happening now.

The season of Advent which is opening up before us now orients us toward the celebration of Christmas in three and a half weeks' time. Even more, Advent directs us to the Parousia, the second coming of

Jesus at the end of the world. But the poem I just read points to yet another reality that Christ is breaking into our present moment in extraordinary ways right now, right in the midst of our ordinary day-to-day lives. One of my favorite scripture commentators wrote: "At the most practical level, our life as Christians is continually being pierced by 1,000 Parousia's and yet these veiled and intimate comings of the Lord are all leading to and are the dress rehearsal for the great Parousia, at the end of time."

It's an interesting concept that we are looking forward to Jesus' return in glory and as Jesus says many times actually in this passage *'we don't know when that is*. It says: *"In the days of Noah they didn't know until the flood came, so will it be also at the coming of the Son of Man. You do not know on which day your Lord will come. If the master of the house had known the hour, so too you must be prepared for in an hour you do not expect the Son of Man will come."*

We do not know when the Lord Jesus will come in glory and yet this poem says He's coming now and the intermediate comings of Christ that is breaking into our life right now is good practice for us to be able to recognize Him and receive Him when He comes in glory. So, we won't be caught off guard, so to speak, we will be expecting Him because we've been expecting Him every moment of our life and noticing Him when He's coming to us. Here are two good questions for us regarding the coming of Christ. Do we believe in the possibility of something completely unexpected and completely beyond us suddenly entering the stage of our life and forever changing its course and the course of the world? Do we believe in that? Do we believe that right now the Lord Jesus could come into our life and change it? We often go about our normal day-to-day life with no expectation that anything will be different; with no expectation that the Lord wants to break in and do something extraordinary and so

we keep doing just what we do. The second question then is tied to this. Do we believe that every ordinary moment of existence is already infused with great mystery and vitality? In other words, do we realize, do we believe, that the present moment is an extraordinary opportunity to welcome the Lord?

If we are truly Christians, we believe these things. So, then Advent urges us to watch. Saint Paul says, “*It is the hour now for you to awake from sleep.*” If the Lord could stand in front of us and wave His arms and say “Wake up pay attention! Watch!” He would. That is why I'm here - waving my arms in front of people saying “Watch! Now is the time to wake from sleep. The slumber of the day-to-day routine. The sameness of everything.

Now, Jesus also says: “Two men will be out in the field. One will be taken, and one will be left. Two women will be grinding at the mill. One will be taken, and one will be left.” The coming of Christ coming it happens in the ordinariness of life. When He comes, what makes the difference that one is taken, and one is left? The interior. The interior. One is looking for the coming of the Lord. Ready to welcome the Lord when He arrives. The other is just going through the motions of life with no expectation of the Lord's coming. So, it's not by magic that we become more attentive or watchful or expectant of the Lord's arrival. That's something we need to work on. We have so many opportunities each day to look for the coming of the Lord. Maybe it's in a conversation with your spouse. Is the Lord's presence in that conversation? Is He breaking in and bringing new understanding of kindness or patience? Maybe it is in an encounter with a stranger, someone in need. Maybe it is in the quiet stillness of prayer that the Lord is going to break in and stir up something. Maybe it is at the grocery store. Maybe it's when you are out for a walk. Maybe it's just when you are going to sleep at night or waking

up in the morning with your cup of coffee. Can every moment of our life be imbued with this breaking in of Christ? It can. It can. So, Advent is a great time for us to practice this. There is a lot that has to be done I know between now and Christmas and people have their to-do lists. Lots of stuff to prepare.

But let's set our spiritual itinerary and right at the top let us say, "We are going to watch a little more carefully." Our eyes are going to be open looking for the coming of the Lord in the ordinary things of day-to-day life because He is coming and in each of those comings, He is preparing us for His glorious coming at the end. Momentarily, the Lord comes to us in quite an extraordinary way that we can see if we approach with the eyes of faith. He comes to us in this Sacrament – the Sacrament of Sacraments! This too then is good practice for us practice in recognizing the Lord as He draws near. May God give all of us the grace this Advent to wake up and be attentive.