

PASTOR'S CORNER



Therefore, stay awake! For you do not know on which day your Lord will come.

Now it seems it would be much easier if Jesus would just tell us when he was coming, would it not? Then I could really be ready. Because this idea of constantly staying awake sounds exhausting, impractical, and probably not a lot of fun.

But there are at least two problems with that. First, there really is a thief – Satan in his envy really is seeking to ensnare us in sin and steal from us the freedom we have received in Jesus Christ. We need to spiritually stay awake and stay on guard with that *armor of light*.

But most importantly we need to always be vigilant because the Lord is not interested in a check list of things we've done or haven't done – It's not really a matter of having the externals in order nor is it a matter of the Lord trying to catch us off guard and trip us up. The Lord does not simply desire a set of external actions: he desires the purity of our hearts for our own sake because he loves us. He wants to see us truly happy because we've given ourselves entirely to him, not out of fear, but out of a love that wants him in my life now.

This is what Advent is really about.

And so if we find ourselves getting lost in the busyness of the season – in travelling and cleaning and entertaining and shopping and shopping and shopping – there is a call to something more. If we spend our week in worldly affairs and only really make Christ a part of it all for that one hour on Sunday – there's an invitation to something quite different. And if our hearts really are asleep being caught up in *works of darkness* – there is real hope that Christ can come and set us free.

Do not let this Advent pass you by. Make that daily time for prayer – get an Advent reflection book or do the daily readings from the Mass. Make time for confession to *throw off those works of darkness*. Take on fasting and almsgiving not so much as a sign of repentance as in the season of Lent – but to help keep us awake; to help keep us aware of God's presence and to open our heart and our very life to his coming among us.

In Christ, through Mary,

Fr. Dominic David Maichrowicz, OP