

Pastor's Corner



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Dear Parishioners,

Children fight sleep to stay awake when they want to be part of something, want to know what's going on, or want to see the end of a game or movie. Try as they might, though, soon their eyes flutter shut and heads nod. Sleeping is hard to fight. This is true not only for children, but for all of us when we don't take the time to get the rest we need. Our physical sleepiness can alert us to spiritual sleepiness. Jesus admonishes us in this weekend's Gospel to "**stay awake.**" Try as we might, however, it is difficult to "**stay awake**" and keep our eyes constantly on Christ's comings. We get distracted by all of the everyday demands on our time.

Daily living is filled with planned events at set hours: eating ... drinking ... marrying ... working. In this way, we human beings measure time. For us, time is duration, relentless minutes ticking on. Once past, there is no recovery of lost hours. Wasted time is lost time. Wasted opportunity is lost growth. Wasted preparedness is lost encounter.

There is, however, another time that cannot be measured: God's time ... the fullness of time in which is the fullness of Life. God's time has no duration. All simply is. All is full of Life. This describes eternity, and even now in our measured time we experience eternity ... God's time. We have those moments when our attentiveness is so acute that the now is all that there is. When Jesus admonishes us to "**stay awake,**" He is inviting attentiveness to His abiding Presence that is now even as its fullness is yet to come. "*As it was*" and as it is, "*so will it be also at the coming of the Son of Man.*" How we live now has consequences beyond our eating ... drinking ... marrying ... working. How we live now is how we will be: taken into God's time or left in the never-ending succession of hours and days, weeks and years.

How we live in our time is a doorway into God's time. How we live in our time prepares us for Christ's Second Coming, while it also prepares us for living more fully even now. Advent calls us to immerse ourselves in God's time and to stay awake for the Life that is to come – and is already now.

The Prophet Isaiah admonishes the people of his time to "*climb the LORD'S mountain ... that He may instruct us in His ways.*" We are thus not at a loss about how we walk in the light and live in God's time. We are to listen to God's instructions, one practical way to "**stay awake**" and prepare for Christ's coming.

Instructions in God's ways – in doing God's will – comes more formally through the Readings and the Homily at Sunday Mass or through catechetical instructions. But this is not the only way God teaches us right living. God's instructions also come through people who may ask for our help (giving us the choice to put another's good ahead of our own) or numerous everyday situations when we are faced with making moral choices (such as whether or not to put in an honest day's work). The issue is to listen and to see in these practical situations – in our own measured time – how God is drawing us into an eternity of time. Our listening means staying awake. Advent will bring us many choices. How we respond is practice in being prepared. Our everyday choices to follow God's ways immerse us in God's time where we already now experience the Life that only God can give.

May Saint Michael the Archangel defend, guide, protect, and intercede for us always!

Fr. Larry