

First Sunday of Advent Year A [2010]

Matthew 24: 37 – 44

This passage is an expansion of Mark 13 which is also an eschatological chapter. The word “Eschatological” means dealing with the “End Times” or the fulfilment of all time. The Advent Gospels all point us towards this fulfilment and indeed in the old lectionary the focus of the four Sundays of Advent were considerations of Death, Heaven, Hell and the Last Judgement. This particular passage is a reminder that because the time of the Son of Man’s coming remains unknown and is an absolute mystery, the proper attitude is to be one of watchfulness at all times. The unexpected coming is emphasised by reference to the days of Noah and the flood (verse 37). We are warned to be careful because two people who are doing the same tasks and therefore look the same – one will become part of God’s Kingdom and the other left behind when Christ comes (verse 40). The unexpected time of the coming is emphasised again by reference to the thief breaking in at an unexpected time (verse 43).

Questions for further thought or discussion

1. Are you good at waiting patiently?
2. Describe a time when you had to wait for something very important?
3. Is there a difference between waiting anxiously and eager anticipation?
4. Advent is about Jesus coming to us. What can you do during this season to make him welcome?
5. In Advent we look backward to Christ’s first coming and forward to his next. This reading is about *now*. What is so important about now? Does Christ come now also? Are we attentive to every moment in the present?