

HOPING

Our hearts are made for you, O God, and we shall not rest until we find our home in you. (St Augustine)

Awakened by the Word we turn now towards the Lord.

1. What do you want to say to the Lord about what you have heard?
2. What might you say about anxiety before change? What strength might you seek? What wisdom do you seek from the Lord?
3. What word about your life - be it a word of thanksgiving, sorrow, joy, peace, petition do you now bring to the Lord?

Closing Prayer

Lord, grant perseverance and patience, that our lives may announce the good news of the kingdom, for which we now pray:

Our Father



Our deepest prayer is one that rises from the heart in response to the realities of life. (Michael Casey)

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Hearing Happening Hoping

**Journey with God's Word
First Sunday of Advent**

Matthew 24:37-44



The Word of God comes to us to awaken our hearts. So we begin by praying: God our Father, send Your Spirit upon us now, that we may meet Jesus in the Word that comes from you. May we come to know him, may we come to love him more deeply and so be drawn closer to the happiness of your Kingdom. Amen.

Matthew 24:37-44

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 the 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! You have the words of eternal life!

We read the passage 2-3 times. Reflect and share on some of the following:

1. What phrases stand out for you in this passage? What do you find disturbing or consoling?
2. What does Jesus feel about the people in the days of Noah?
3. According to Jesus, what do we risk if we do not stay awake?
4. How does this passage leave you feeling? Glad? Anxious? Under threat? Unsure? Joyful?



HAPPENING ~ Speak Lord, your servants are listening! In the Light of the Word we look at our lives.

We read the passage again and reflect on **some** of the following:

1. 'As it was in Noah's day...'
What is happening in our own day that dulls us to what's really going on?
2. 'One is taken, one left...'
Where do you see the randomness of life?
How does it leave you feeling?
3. 'You too must stand ready...'
What helps us tune into what God is doing in our lives and in the world? What keeps us alert to the action of God?
4. 'The Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.'
How can we prepare for the unknown and the unexpected? What changes would be required in our lives to live a life of readiness?



**Constantly the Lord comes. He comes—as a human into our human situation—to transform it from the inside.
(Maria Boulding OSB)**