

Monday, December 17th, 2012

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Scripture:

Luke 22: 39-46

39He came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed him. 40When he reached the place, he said to them, "Pray that you may not come into the time of trial." 41Then he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, 42"Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done.' 43Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and gave him strength. 44In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground. 45When he got up from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping because of grief, 46and he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not come into the time of trial."

Devotional:

“Waiting” is a major theme during Advent. In the Lucan reading today, Jesus takes the disciples with him to Gethsemane, asking them to pray that they not enter into temptation. He says in effect, “Wait and pray.” That’s what Advent is all about, isn’t it? As we go through Advent, waiting for the celebration of the Christ-child’s coming into this world, we are encouraged to reflect on the mysteries of God’s greatness and God’s grace. And what better way to ponder these things than to be in a spirit of prayer? From this passage, we might take the disciples as a model for our celebration of Advent, but there’s a problem here. The disciples wait, all right, but instead of praying, they fall asleep. The cares of this world – not to mention their worries and anxieties – are too much for them, and they escape into sleep. While we may not fall asleep, will our own cares and anxieties keep us from praying as we wait during Advent?

Prayer:

Lord God, as we wait during this Advent season, enable us to be awake to your greatness and grace, alert to the mystery of the coming Christ-child, and attentive to the movement of your Spirit in our hearts and lives. Assist us to “wait and pray” with joy and gladness. In Jesus’ name, Amen.