

Tues., Dec. 13, 2011

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## **Scripture**

Matthew 24:32-44

<sup>32</sup>"From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. <sup>33</sup>So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates. <sup>34</sup>Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place.

<sup>35</sup>Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

<sup>36</sup>"But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. <sup>37</sup>For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup>For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, <sup>39</sup>and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. <sup>40</sup>Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left.

<sup>41</sup>Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. <sup>42</sup>Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. <sup>43</sup>But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. <sup>44</sup>Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.

## **Devotional**

During the season of Advent, we often become distracted by the preparations for Christmas Day. Shopping, Christmas cards, baking, parties; the list is long and the time is short. There is little time to prepare our hearts for the coming of the Christ Child, let alone the Second Coming. We put off prayer, meditation and the reading of Scripture because there is always tomorrow. Or, is there? We have no idea when Christ will return to gather his own, yet we live as though we have all the tomorrows in the world. Biblical witness makes it clear that the Son of Man will return to judge the world by the way we have treated those in need, the most vulnerable among us. God expects us to follow Jesus' example of sacrificial love and obedience, upholding Christian standards. Don't wait until tomorrow; it may never come. Stay alert, watch, and be prepared!

## **Prayer**

Holy and most merciful God, remove from our path anything that would distract or separate us from you. Fill us with your Holy Spirit and guide us to love our neighbor, recognizing you in our midst. Help us to stay awake, to watch, and to prepare ourselves – body, mind, and soul - for your coming. In the name of Jesus the Christ we pray, Amen.