

## Homily by Fr. Anthony Davis

**“Ready or not, here I come.” “Maran Atha” - Come Lord Jesus!!**

November 29, 2020

1st Sunday of Advent (Yr B)

Is 63:16b-17, 19b; 64:2-7; 1 Cor 1:3-9; Mk 13:33-37

When you were a child, did you play the game, “Hide and Seek”? If you did, you would remember, that the person who was “it” closed/blind-folded his eyes, while the rest went to hide. To give them time to hide, the child started counting: 5, 10, 15, 20 and up to 100. Then he would say, “Ready or not, here I come!”

The point of the game was to hide oneself so well that the leader could not find you, for if he found you, and beat you back to the goal, you had to be “it” the next go-around. The secret of the game was preparing oneself against being found and caught. With excitement we heard the words, “Ready or not -- here I come!”

In today's Gospel lesson Jesus is saying to the world, “Ready or not -- here I come.” In chapter 13 of Mark, Jesus tells us that he will be returning to the earth “with great power and glory.” As in the game, this admonishment is not a game!! In fact, there is a counting and an accounting going on right now. It is a countdown before the blast of his appearance on earth, a second time to judge the world and to gather his faithful to himself.

In the 1<sup>st</sup> reading, the prophet Isaiah prays for God’s active presence so that the Jewish community, who had just returned from Babylonian exile, may remain faithful to their God.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading, St. Paul prays for the reconversion of Christians in Corinth who have misused their gifts and charisms and remain ill-prepared for Christ’s Second Coming.

In today’s Gospel, using the short parable of the servants and gatekeeper of an absentee master who could return at any time, Jesus instructs his followers to be alert and watchful while doing their Christian duties with sincerity. Hence, the gatekeeper and the household servants are expected to be ever vigilant because their master is sure to return, although the time of his return is uncertain, but the reward or punishment is sure and certain.

Hence, Jesus warns us, “Ready or not, here I come.” Are we ready to respond: “Maran Atha”- Come Lord Jesus?

The message of today’s Scripture is that we should live in the living presence of Jesus every day waiting for his Second Coming. While Christ Jesus changed our relationship with God, we are still flawed human beings. He tells us clearly that we need to keep watch over our faith!

Advent is a perfect time to practice our vigilance and “Be prepared”. This means that we are not just awaiting the coming of the Savior in the celebration of Christmas in Christ’s birth. We should be learning to better focus our faith on the enrichment of spiritual gifts that come to us in Jesus.

Therefore, this Advent season, as we plan our gift giving, I pray that we can think of ways that we can better share our spiritual gifts with others. *During this very difficult time, I think our loved ones really need our gifts of faith, hope, charity, love, forgiveness, and encouragement much more than they need chocolates or sweaters.*

I give thanks for Advent as the time to enrich ourselves in all these ways through the grace of God. The early Christians experienced it, and that is why the mutual greeting among Christians was not “Hi!” or “Good Morning!” but the Aramaic, “Maran Atha” which means “Come, Lord Jesus.” This greeting acknowledged Jesus present in each of them and about to return, as he alerts us all saying: “Ready or not, here I come.” And we all respond: “Maran Atha”-“Come Lord Jesus”!!

May God bless you and keep you ever prepared for Christ’s second coming. AMEN.