

HOMILY FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR B

1. For many some of the hardest things to consider doing is to wait and to be patient
 - a. Patient waiting would seem very challenging
 - b. We live in an age of instant gratification
 - c. We pay electric bills for instant on television
 - i. Hard to imagine actually waiting for the electronics to warm up like tubes before we get a picture
 - d. Waiting in line usually is a sign of something very valuable to those in line
2. Advent presents a challenge to us
 - a. Jesus says it is time to watch
 - b. He says it is like a man traveling abroad
 - c. Tells his gatekeeper to be alert to open up the gates when he gets back
 - i. He does not know what day it will be, nor whether it will be morning evening or night
 - ii. But with the danger for a man of wealth, he wants to be let into his house as soon as he gets there
 - d. Very serious responsibility to be always on alert, ready to let the master of the house in
3. Jesus says we are the gatekeeper of ourselves, our souls, our spirits, our bodies
 - a. We are the guard, the one at watch
 - b. The purpose of the guard, the watchman is to make sure the doors is closed to keep evil out
 - c. And to be alert and ready to let the master in
 - d. This will require patient waiting, we do not know when God will into our lives in a new way
4. The difficulty we have with this image of patiently waiting for the Lord is that we tend to think of waiting as a waste of time
 - a. Why doesn't God just come into our lives and make us holy at once, why do we have to worry about being alert
 - b. Isaiah provide an image to describe what waiting is about
 - c. God is the potter and we are the clay, we are the work of his hands
 - d. Waiting and being on the watch is not about doing nothing, it is not about wasting our time
 - e. While we watch for Jesus, He is working on us
 - f. He is forming us, preparing us to be a beautiful gift for the Father
5. The difficulty we have in this age is that it is hard to allow God to form us
 - a. We are tempted to flit from one excitement to another

- b. We do not allow ourselves time to experience God in our lives
- c. True watching for God means looking seriously at things around us
- d. Can we have a sense of wonder at the glories God is working for us
- e. Waiting and watching is about taking time to see others and even ourselves in a new light
- f. If we listen carefully to those around us, what new things might we discover about them
- g. If we quietly opened our thoughts to God, what new things we might learn about ourselves
- h. This is really the focus of this season
- i. In the midst of the frantic shopping and parties our culture calls us
- j. God is calling us to quiet ourselves, to pay attention to what is around us
- k. In the quiet moments, we can allow God to work on us, to make us worthy of His presence
- l. And one day we will suddenly discover that he had remade us a beautiful adopted child.
- m. Becoming aware of what God is doing to us means that we must pay attention
- n. As Jesus says we must watch and be ready to realize that God truly is transforming us and making us a holy people.
- o. Recognizing this is not something that just happens, we have to patiently prepare ourselves to be ready to see God's work in us