

## Advent 1C - November 2021

### **"We don't have time for that!"**

Typical of last-minute Christmas shoppers, a mother was running furiously from store to store. Suddenly she became aware that the pudgy little hand of her three-year-old son was no longer clutched in hers. In panic she retraced her steps and found him standing with his little nose pressed flat against a frosty window. He was gazing at a manger scene. Hearing his mother's near hysterical call, he turned and shouted with innocent glee: **"Look Mommy! It's Jesus - Baby Jesus in the hay!"** With obvious indifference to his joy and wonder, she impatiently jerked him away saying, **"We don't have time for that!"**

### **Are we coming or going?**

A man was running down the pier, heading for the ferryboat, afraid he was not going to make it. Here was a man of some status, a man who was concerned about his dignity. He wore pin-striped trousers, a black Morning Coat, carried a black umbrella in one hand and a black bowler hat in the other, with which he was waving at the ferry boat, and yelling at the boat to stop so that he could get on it. He ran all the way to the end of the pier, furiously jumped and landed safely on the deck of the boat. Very proud of himself, he straightened his tie, and recovered his dignity. It was then that he discovered that the boat was not going out; it was coming in!

Today is the first Sunday of Advent, and there is that kind of confusion about Advent and Christmas. Are we coming or going? Christmas is the celebration that Christ has come; Advent is the celebration that Christ is coming. Advent is preparation for Christmas. (Fr. Tony) (<https://frtonyshomilies.com/>)  
L/21

### **Missing the signal!**

In its day, the Titanic was the world's largest ocean-liner, weighing 46,328 tons, and it was considered unsinkable. Yet, late during the night of April 14-15, 1912, the unthinkable happened to the unsinkable. Near midnight, the great Titanic struck an iceberg, ripping a three-hundred-foot hole through five of its sixteen watertight compartments. It sank in two and a half hours killing 1,513 people.

Before the Titanic sank, warning after warning had been sent to tell the crew that they were speeding into an ice field, but the messages were ignored.

In fact, when a nearby ship sent an urgent warning, the Titanic was talking to Cape Race about the time the chauffeurs were to meet arriving passengers at the dock in New York, and what dinner menus were to be ready. Preoccupied with the trivia, the Titanic responded to the warning, "Shut up. I am talking to Cape Race. You are jamming my signals!"

Why did so many die that night? Perhaps the crew disregarded the danger of the weather; there were not enough lifeboats on board; and the radio operator of nearby *California* was off duty; perhaps those responsible did not heed the warnings; they were preoccupied with other things! —

Sometimes we believe that our 'ship' is unsinkable, our life is completely planned, and the unthinkable can never happen to us. We need to read the signs of the times; we need to pay attention to the warning signals. But if we are preoccupied with the trivial things of life we will miss the most important things till

it is too late. The First Sunday of Advent gives us the warning to be watchful, waiting, and prepared. (Fr. Tony) (<https://frtonyshomilies.com/>) L/21

### **Would we keep arranging deckchairs on a sinking ship?**

"If we'd been on the Titanic when it sank, would we have arranged the deckchairs?" At first we say to ourselves, "What a ridiculous question! No one in his right mind would ignore wailing sirens on a sinking ship and rearrange its deck chairs! No one with an ounce of sanity would ignore the shouts of drowning people and keep arranging deck chairs!"

And suddenly we ask ourselves, "Are we perhaps, rearranging the deckchairs on a sinking ship? — For example, are we so caught up with material things in life that we are giving a back seat to spiritual things? Are we so busy making a living that we are forgetting the purpose of life? Are we so taken up with life that we are forgetting why God gave us life?" (Mark Link in *Sunday Liturgies*). (Fr. Tony) (<https://frtonyshomilies.com/>) L/21

[Annie Dillard](#) shares this story about proper waiting: She had been watching a butterfly emerge from its cocoon and was fascinated by the process until she grew impatient with how long it was taking and, to speed things up, took a candle and heated the cocoon, albeit very gently.

The experiment worked, but it was a mistake in the long run.

The butterfly emerged more quickly; however, because adding heat violated something within the natural process, the butterfly was born with wings too weak to fly. Haste and prematurity had stunted and deformed a natural process. Some things can't be rushed.

Learn to wait! That's not something we do easily and many of our problems flow from that. We often don't wait properly for things. (Fr. Ron Rolheiser)

### **Sound Theology**

In the Peanuts comic strip, Linus and Lucy are standing at the window looking out at the rain falling. Lucy says to Linus, "Boy, look at it rain... What if it floods the earth?" Linus, the resident biblical scholar for the Peanuts, answers, "It will never do that...in the ninth chapter of *Genesis*, God promised Noah that would never happen again, and the sign of the promise is the rainbow." With a smile on her face, Lucy replies, "Linus, you've taken a great load off my mind." To which Linus responds, "Sound theology has a way of doing that." (by Charles Schultz, *Peanuts*, adapted by David E. Leininger)

### **The difference between waiting and watching:**

Some Navy men were returning from a long voyage on the seas and, as the boat approached shore, the men were all looking for their wives and girlfriends on the shore ... eager to see them again! As the men looked over the crowd of women lined up, the air of excitement and expectancy grew.

One man however was all alone as all the other men found their wives and girlfriends and they all embraced ... his wife wasn't there! Worried, he hurried home and found a light on in his house. As he entered he was relieved to see his wife, she quickly turned and said, "HONEY, I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU!"

His response showed his disappointment however: 'The other men's wives and girlfriends were watching for them!' — The difference between waiting and watching was only too clear! (Fr. Lakra).

