

# 1st Sunday of Advent

**Matthew 24:37–44**

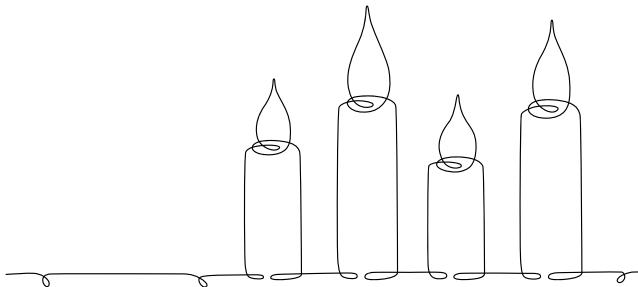
**Stay awake so that you may be ready.**

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: 'For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one left. Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master 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. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.'

## Reflection

Jesus tells us to stay awake- to be ready, alert, and aware of what really matters. In Noah's time, people were busy with everyday life and missed the signs of God's presence. Jesus warns us not to fall asleep spiritually- not to let routine or distraction stop us from seeing where God is at work.

As Vincentians (people in the SVP family) , we are called to live awake lives - ready to recognise Christ in the people around us, especially those who are struggling or forgotten. Blessed Frédéric Ozanam said that "Charity is the Samaritan who pours oil on the wounds of the traveller." To live like this, we need to be alert to the needs of others and open to where God might be calling us to act.



As Vincentians, we stay awake by practising "See, Think, Do", the Vincentian way of living the Gospel.

- See: Look carefully at what's happening around you. What needs do you notice in your local community, your school, or your friend group? Who is struggling or left out?
- Think : Reflect in the light of faith. What would Jesus say about this situation and what can we do to help?
- Do: Take action - even something small. Offer kindness, speak up, serve others, or bring hope.

Staying awake isn't about fear of the unknown - it's about being ready to love. Every time we see, think, and do with compassion, we are preparing our hearts for Christ's coming.

## Activity

Advent is a time for slowing down and paying attention. It's a chance to pause in the middle of busy days and remember that Jesus asks us to "stay awake", to be alert so we don't miss the ways He is quietly present in our lives.

Invite everyone to sit in stillness for one minute. In that silence, encourage them to simply notice: How am I feeling right now? Who have I seen today who might need a bit of kindness? What have I been too busy to see? This small moment of quiet is what Advent is all about - creating space to become more awake to God and to the people around us.

After the silence, ask each person to make a simple Advent promise starting with:

"To stay awake this Advent, I will..."

It might be looking out for someone who seems left out, helping at home without being asked, or offering a kind word to someone who's struggling.

## Call to Action

Choose one person to look out for this week, and let your kindness be your Advent preparation.