# LSW

children

*do good until the end of our lives. Whether the Second Coming happens in our lifetimes or not, it is not important. What is important that we are always prepared for it. That on the day we die, we can say we have done all that we can do in our lives to get a good judgement on the day of the Second Coming – by being true to Jesus and his teachings.*

Year B

**Thirty-third Ordinary Sunday**

### Images

We do not know the hour

#### Points to note

This reading is rather topical, coming just two weeks before the start of Advent. However, in order not to anticipate the theme waiting of Advent too much, we focus on what it is that we are not aware of - the time of Jesus’ coming. In a way, this runs well into the theme of Advent.

There are many sects around who claim they know when is Jesus’ second coming. They get their adherents to sell all they have and wait – typically at hill where Jesus will appear, conveniently nearby. They are called millenarianists, meaning those who focuses on the thousand years that they will reign with Christ. Not all millenarianists claim they know the timing though and many are rather moderates in their views even as they wait for Jesus. Some are considered mainstream Christians (Seventh Day Adventists) while others are not accepted by mainstream Christians as Christians (Jehovah Witnesses, Mormons). The rest are sects, Christian & otherwise.

Catholic teaching is that while we wait for the second coming of Jesus but we do not know the hour nor do we attempt to find out. The hour is not important in our faith – we just prepare ourselves whatever the hour. I once asked a group of children how long the season of Advent last. One seven-year old child enthusiastically and definitively said “Forever!” You know, she is right – it lasts forever because we do not know the hour and so, we wait forever.

**Liturgy**

Acclamation before the Gospel

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Stay awake and stand ready,

because you do not know the hour

when the Son of Man is coming.

Alleluia!

Gospel

The Lord be with you.

*All:*  And also with you.

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St Mark

(Mk 13: 24-32)

Jesus said, ‘In those days, after the time of distress, the sun will be darkened, the moon will lose its brightness, the stars will come falling from heaven and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory; then too he will send the angels to gather his chosen from the four winds, from the ends of the world to the ends of heaven.

‘Take the fig tree as a parable: as soon as its twigs grow supple and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. So with you when you see these things happening: know that he is near, at the very gates. I tell you solemnly, before this generation has passed away all these things will have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

‘But as for that day or hour, nobody knows it, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son; no one but the Father.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

##### Discussion

Have you ever waited for anyone or anything? *Discuss about waiting for Christmas to come, or a birthday or a visit of a favourite relative from overseas. Take the example of Christmas and what they do to prepare. Do not dwell on it as you will be discussing it in greater detail next month. You can even talk about children being good waiting for Santa Claus to come. Ignore those older killjoys among the children trying to tell the younger ones there is no Santa Claus.*

What if you were asked to prepare for Christmas but nobody knows the date? *I love the pause as the concept sink into the children. Some may even question the point of waiting if that something may not even happen. Keep it warm as it is a good question.*

What if you had a favourite relative who says that he/she will be coming for a visit but will not tell you the date? He/she tells you to get everything ready because he/she will be taking you on a journey. *Discuss what the children will do. Some will be sceptical and I think it is healthy to be sceptical like this in today’s world.*  *Ask how do they feel if days turn into weeks, weeks into months, and months into years as they wait?*

*Explain the church teaching on the Second Coming. That Jesus will come again. It will be preceded by great suffering and persecution of the Church but we do not know the details. Jesus will come in triumph to defeat evil and usher in a period of paradise on earth where we will reign with him in glory. He will also raise up all who are dead (suggest you pass this part quickly if you are not prepared for awkward questions – like what age will they be, etc – for which the Church do not have definitive answers). That Jesus will judge all the living and the dead.*

*Discuss that we wait for the coming of Jesus by doing good and being prepared for that judgement. And as we do not know when that judgement will be, it means we will continue to*