

21st week, Thursday, Ordinary Time:

I love those words of St. Paul in our 1st reading; “*may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all...*” This is why we come to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, to allow these sacraments of Redemption to transform our hearts as we offer all the ordinary tasks of our day right with the One Sacrifice of Jesus. Our Lord Jesus is so good that He even comes to us and gives us Himself as our heavenly food, the Bread of Life in Holy Communion. This Real Presence of Jesus within us has infinite power to stretch our hearts, increasing our ability to love with and in Jesus. So Our Lord Jesus wants our lives to become fruitful just as St. Paul prays, that our lives would abound with real acts of love for one another and for all... loving others in our family, being patient with others, seeing others with the eyes of Jesus, looking for occasions to offer little sacrifices to Jesus as we bear with one another.

If we live in this Love of Christ, we will be doing just what Jesus says to us in the Gospel; “*Stay awake! For you do not know on which day your Lord will come.*” If we are living in love, loving God with all our hearts and loving our neighbor with the Heart of Jesus, we will already have the Presence of Jesus alive and well in our hearts. Then we will be ready when Our Lord Jesus comes to take us home. We would even be ready if the 2nd Coming of Jesus happened today or tomorrow.

One time St. Francis was working with a brother in the garden or something like that, and the brother asked St. Francis what he would do if he knew Jesus was going to return in His 2nd Coming that day. St. Francis simply said he would continue gardening as he was, doing all for the Love of God. When we are living in the Love of God, we simply are awake and ready for the coming of the Lord.

At times, our souls can slip into a sleep. We can miss those little opportunities of love. We can give in to a spiritual laziness and sometimes without knowing it begin living our lives for self instead of for God. When we miss those opportunities of Love or simply choose not to do them out of spiritual laziness, we lose our inner peace and joy.

Jesus says to us, “*you also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come.*” Lord Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, do whatever it takes to keep us in your love. Awaken us to those many opportunities we have of receiving the Love of God and sharing this Divine Love with others.