

# CONNECT! SUNDAY REFLECTION

1st Sunday in Ordinary Time | For Sunday, November 27, 2022

## A World Whose Time Has Come

Written by Colleen Jurkiewicz

**Isaiah 2:1-5**

**Romans 13:11-14**

**Matthew 24:37-44**



*"Brothers and sisters: You know the time; it is the hour now for you to awake from sleep." — Romans 13:11*

There is an old-fashioned phrase that always charms me when I see it, "a woman whose time has come."

It describes a pregnant woman whose due date is close at hand, and it is a relic of an era where all references to pregnancy and childbirth in polite society were wrapped in rhetorical cotton. "In a delicate condition," "In the family way," "Expecting."

Part of me is inclined to roll my eyes at these euphemisms, because I really believe that creating a pro-life culture demands that we talk frankly about the experience of being pregnant and giving birth. And yet. *And yet.* I cannot help but be attracted to these expressions, in all their affected preciousness. There is something so reverent — so deferential — in how they frame the reality of childbirth and all that leads up to it.

Interwoven themes of timeliness, expectation, and preparedness course through the Advent liturgical season. We are streaming toward the mountain of the Lord's house, seeking the God of Jacob, knowing that "salvation is nearer now than when we first believed." There is a clear parallel between the Incarnation — the coming of Mary's hour — and the fulfillment of all things, the return of Christ. *Get ready, get ready, get ready,* is the drumbeat of every Sunday's Liturgy of the Word. *The time has almost come. Stay awake. Be prepared.*

I think one of the devil's greatest ingenuities is the chaos of modern Christmas — and I say that as someone who sincerely enjoys Irving Berlin tunes, Hallmark movies and all the other trappings of the postmodern secular “holiday season.” But it's all *so much*, isn't it? It's so intense. It's so distracting. It's a poor man's Advent.

In the four weeks of Advent, I think I ask myself, “Am I ready?” about 400 times, but it's so rarely in reference to anything that really matters. I'm worried about the gifts for the kids, the potatoes I promised to bring to the family party, the delayed shipping on the Christmas cards. For what am I preparing here?

I'm not advocating against Irving Berlin, Hallmark movies, holiday parties, and extravagant gift-giving. There is something magical about the flurry of activity leading up to Christmas. All I am saying is (and I'm saying it to myself as much as I am saying it to anyone else), keep these things in their proper place. They are not what make you ready for Christmas.

I love Christmas — but do I love Advent well enough, too? With each of my babies, as I held them in their first moments of life, there was sadness mingled with the joy as I wondered quietly to myself if I had not *missed* something in those last weeks as I frantically washed bottles and prepped freezer meals, making checklist after checklist to ensure that I have “everything ready” for when the baby comes.

Well, the baby always comes, and I am never ready. Because all the neatly stacked diapers and freshly laundered onesies in the world don't make you ready for a baby, just like all the wrapped presents and frosted cookies don't make you ready to receive the gift we are given on Christmas.

— Colleen Jurkiewicz

## Prayer

God of Jacob,  
I am ascending the highest mountain,  
raised above the hills.  
The journey is long.  
The climb is arduous.  
The destination is beyond my sight.  
Give me your light, that I may walk in your paths  
and go rejoicing to the house of the Lord.