

Advent Happenings

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St. Francis Xavier Day

Sat Dec 3

PENANCE SERVICE
Sacred Heart Church

Mon Dec 5 - 5 PM

Thurs Dec 8-5 PM

Feast of the
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE
BVM
MASS, SACRED HEART CHURCH

Sun Dec 4-7:15 PM

CHORAL VESPERS

@

Sacred Heart Church

Featuring

ND

Chorale, Brass Ensemble, Folk,
Handbell, Liturgical and Women's
Choirs

You, all of you, are welcome to
come and participate in these
Advent Happenings.
Catch the Christmas Spirit.

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The Rush is on!

3 Weeks:

Papers

Catch-up Study

All Nighters

Finals

Home

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Advent >>>Christmas

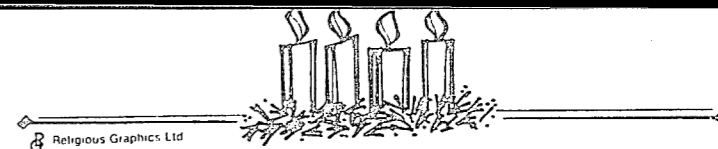
The human condition, reality, here at ND at this time of Fall Term is hectic, sleepless, tension laden, overwhelming, tiring, and more. Students show the wear but faculty and staff also feel the pressure. It is the way it is---our human condition. How can one take time for a thought about Advent and Christmas? Don't even ask...

Yet, Jesus became one of us, God was made flesh, our flesh, part of our human condition. We wait for Him and He comes to us as a part of our condition. Why not take a bit of time each day until Christmas to share your anxiety, your anticipation of finishing in good style and heading home. Find a quiet spot and spend three minutes each day waiting. Let Jesus share your struggle to reach the end. Let him help. Then, we can arrive, come to the 25th closer to the Person who makes it all happen. During those precious three minutes each day one could simply and plainly repeat:

Come Lord Jesus.

Gradually, we will be answering Jesus when He asks us, "Who do you say I am?"

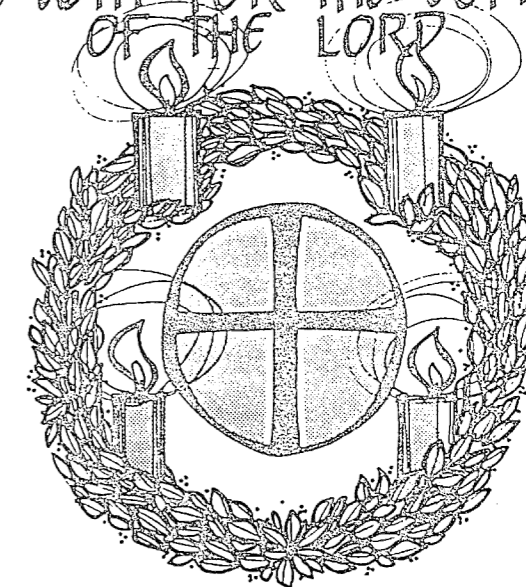
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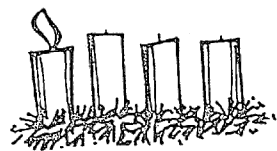
WE WAIT FOR THE COMING
OF THE LORD



ADVENT 1988

Religious Graphics Ltd.

First Sunday
of Advent
November 27, 1988
To you, O Lord, I lift my soul.



waiting for insight

John S. Dunne

*...I would like to reflect on the experience of waiting on God. It is, I believe, the heart of prayer. It is a waiting on a God who is hidden in the darkness, not only the darkness that comes before and after life, but also the darkness that is found again and again during life whenever one is searching for one's way. The waiting is the praying, and the coming of God is the answer to the prayer, and His coming takes the form of a kindling of light in the darkness. This kindling of light I shall call "insight."

*...Imagine a man who has come to a time of darkness in his life when he doesn't know which way to go... Ordinarily a person would go through two stages in reaching a decision. First he would explore the possibilities in his mind, imagining himself into them... then at length he would make his choice... The first stage by itself does not ordinarily lead to a resolution. It only reveals the possibilities and their consequences... Let us imagine a man who halts between the exploration of possibilities and the choice and waits for insight... When he was exploring the possibilities, he was calculating advantages and disadvantages... Now as he waits for insight, he is not looking for an error in his calculations or for a new balance of advantages. He is looking rather for a new vision of the way. When he was calculating, he was working out the question, "What shall I do with my life?" Now as he waits for insight, he is asking a different question, "Is there something my life wants to do with me?", or if he is confident that his life does have a goal of its own, independent of any purpose he tries to impose upon it, then, "What does my life want of me?"

*...His first question comes first, "Is there something my life demands of me or calls me to do?" He fears that anything he may find in his life will turn out to be something he has put there himself... A good sign that it is a true call, he reasons, would be if it went against his wishes... On further thought it occurs to him that there could be part of him that does not want the call and another part of him that does... A call that goes against one wish could be in accord with another... So the fact that a call is against certain of his wishes, he is forced to conclude, is no sign that it is a true call. Indeed maybe a call is always in accord with one's deepest wishes... Maybe the call is the heart's desire and one is led by one's heart.

COME EMMANUEL

*...If that is true, then in waiting for insight, he sees, he is waiting for his heart to speak. What he should be doing while he is waiting is listening to the different voices within himself... Now he is entering into the second question, "What does my life demand of me?" The first question, nevertheless, is still in the back of his mind and comes to the fore whenever the inner voices seem to conflict... Kierkegaard's saying comes to mind, "Purity of heart is to will one thing." The man we are imagining is searching his heart for that one thing... He searches and searches, but does not find it... For a moment he thinks he has fallen back into calculative thinking, for these inner voices are urging the very same things he was considering when he was calculating his possible courses of action. Yet he realizes now that he is no longer calculating but listening... listening to the sources of these calculations. He is trying to find out what part of himself is speaking when he hears a given voice and its promptings... The only thing that is over and above all these voices is his own listening. That he reflects, may be the unifying factor, his listening, his waiting for insight. In fact, that waiting, he begins to see, is the willing of one thing. He is willing one thing insofar as he is waiting for one thing, the unknown path he must walk... Yet he is still in darkness... He begins to worry about the amount of time he is spending... fearing that he is simply being indecisive... Still he continues to wait, seeing that the waiting itself is unifying everything in him and giving him purity of heart...

*...As he continues on in the darkness hoping for some light to appear, he notices that the aspect of his choices is changing... The waiting is itself working a change in him. His choices begin to appear in a new perspective... Some of them seem to have no significance beyond the calculative, but some seem to embody the meditative spirit of waiting. The saying of Jesus comes to mind, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." He begins to hope that the waiting in darkness is a willing of one thing, a purity of heart that will enable him to see his way, to see the way God wants him to follow. That seeing of the way, he expects, will be the seeing of God, a seeing of the will of God. The willing of one thing and the will of God, he thinks, must somehow go together. His own waiting for insight is a gathering of all his forces, a coming together of everything within him. If God leads by the heart, then God's leading should come to light, as it seems to be doing, when the heart becomes pure, when the heart begins to will one thing.



*...He is able now to pose the question of choice in terms of the heart. He has waited long enough for risks and calculations to recede into the background and for the question of the heart to come to the foreground., "Would my heart be in this?" he now asks of each possibility... This question is so simple that it seems he could have asked it at any time. Still the waiting on insight has been a purification of his heart that has enabled him to pass from his initial fears and calculation of risks to the matter of his heart's desire. The question of the heart could have been asked at any time but only now has it become uppermost in his mind. It casts a light upon his alternatives... making it seem possible now to make a choice that is not arbitrary. Where before it seemed that he could go various ways, now it seems fairly clear that there is only one way...

*...He makes his choice. As he makes it though, he is aware that he is not entirely sure of himself... He makes his decision with the awareness that he may be entirely wrong. In coming to his decision, however, he has not been seeking certainty so much as understanding and insight... If his heart is not pure, if the path he has chosen is not that of heart's desire, if it is not the will of God for him, then he has hope that this will come to light as he travels the path. His waiting for insight continues on into the carrying out of his decision. He meets his uncertainty not by seeking for certainty--a quest that tends to defeat itself--but by continuing to wait for insight, his whole life becomes a waiting for insight and his hope is that he will be led from one insight to another, that his life will become a voyage of discovery. If he were to formulate as a prayer in words his waiting for insight, it might go something like this: God! Where are You? I am lost. Show me the Way!... Yet prayer, as we have been speaking of it could very well take the form of silence, a silence between the inner noise of calculative thinking and the outer noise of carrying out decision, a silent waiting in the darkness for the light to be kindled.

The above is condensed from the article, "Waiting for Insight," which appeared in Anglican Theological Review, June 1975, p. 44 ff.

