

## Gospel Reflection

I noticed it a few years ago – Christmas lights – up by Halloween! What irritated me most was that I knew that on December 26th, when the Church is just starting to celebrate, much of world is ready to move on. This led me to boycott secular Christmas; no cards, no tree, no gifts. I'd show them! I would do Christmas at Christmas! The problem was that each year I delighted less on Christmas Day, because in my efforts to avoid all things Christmas before December 25th, I stopped longing.

Last year while driving with a friend right after Halloween, she said, "Isn't it neat that people are putting their lights up earlier?" I was certain that she had gone mad. "It's like they can hardly wait for Christmas to come." With her simple childlike statement, my perception shifted. People long for all the goodness that is embodied in Christmas. We long for the light of Christ. Our problem is not longing. It's sustaining that longing.

Today's readings are about longing for Christ's coming, not as a babe, but in majesty and power in the Second Coming. Each reading gives a different vision of what that day will be like, but all three are in agreement – Christ will return! This protracted longing is difficult for us. But retelling the story of Christ's coming as a babe helps us to keep longing for His Second Coming.

So as I drive to the mall to do a little Christmas shopping, the Christmas lights that have been up since November 1st no longer bother me; in fact they remind me to continue longing for Christ!

*Elena Cardeña, Director of Faith Formation*

## KEEPING FAITH FIRST FAMILY FUN

*Matthew 24:37-44*

J G D K I G D T L B W B S  
T N H D T O N N C S Z O E  
N I A B O A I A R E N Z A  
P M B L O H G U N O P D D  
R O F M O X H X F D V X X  
E C V U A M T M A W A K E  
P M S T B R A I M H R O G  
A E X W H N R M W A R B M  
R S C S T I H I I K U S J  
E Y K K H O E A A R O Q Z  
D P S D L E I F O G H J X  
L L I M Z F W U V N E R U  
J A F A M M Z O L Y L R W

**Find these words from the Gospel passage.**

ARK	AWAKE	COMING
EXPECT	FIELDS	FLOOD
HOUR	HOUSE	MARRIAGE
MILL	NIGHT	NOAH
PREPARED	SON OF MAN	THIEF

## Disciple's Reflection & Questions of the Week

*First Sunday of Advent  
12/2/07*

*Matthew 24:37-44  
Faith-Sharing  
Questions of the Week*



***Our Lady of the Assumption***

435 Berkeley Ave.  
Claremont, CA  
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## Call to Prayer

*We begin by calling upon God:*

**In the Name of the Father,  
and of the Son, and of the  
Holy Spirit, Amen.**

*We then pause for a moment to listen with  
our hearts to this week's Gospel passage...*

**The Word of God:** *Matthew 24:37-44*

### ***The Gospel according to Matthew***

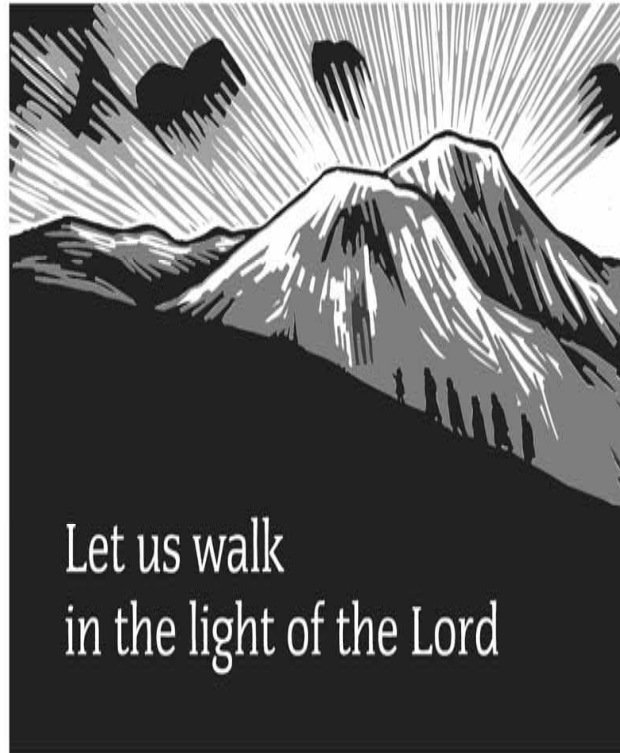
Jesus said to his disciples: "As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. In those days before the **flood**, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day that Noah entered the ark. They did not know until the flood came and carried them all away. So will it be also at the coming of the Son of Man.

Two men will be out in the field; one will be taken, and one will be left. Two women will be grinding at the **mill**; one will be taken, and one will be left. Therefore, stay awake! For you do not know on which day your Lord will come.

Be sure of this: if the master of the house had known the hour of the night when the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and not let his house

be broken into. So too you also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come."

### ***The Gospel of the Lord***



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### **Gospel Glossary**

**Flood:** the devastating 40-day flood recorded in the Bible.

**Mill:** a building in which cereal grains are ground into meal or flour.

## Faith Sharing

### **Questions of the Week**

- How do my actions show that I am longing for Christ
- What 'gift' am I most longing for this year? How does that gift reflect God's love?
- What part of preparing for Christmas gets in the way of preparing for Christ?

## Closing Prayer

*Father in heaven,*

*Our heart desire the warmth of your love and our minds are searching for the light of your Word. Increase our longing for Christ our Savior and give us the strength to grow in love, that the dawn of his coming may find us rejoicing in his presence and welcoming the light of his truth. We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord.*

*Amen.*

**First Sunday of Advent**