

GOSPEL MESSAGE

November 8, 2026

LECTIONARY 32

The Challenge of Waiting

For many of us, waiting is not a pleasant experience. Whether our waiting is mundane, like waiting in a long line at the grocery store checkout counter, or profound, like waiting for a medical diagnosis or for a new stage of life to begin, we often feel anxious or uneasy, impatient or frustrated, longing for the wait to be over. Over the course of our lives, we get plenty of experience with waiting but might never learn to be patient, even amid the frustration.

As uncomfortable as waiting may be, it is a necessary aspect of the life of faith. We live in the days between Christ's coming at his birth and his return, that longed-for day of hope and promises fulfilled. Seasons of our liturgical life train us in the art of holy waiting. We wait during Advent for Christ's birth, longing for the joy of his arrival as a child in Bethlehem. We wait during Lent for the bright joy of resurrection, abstaining from "alleluias" and quieting ourselves with prayer and fasting. Just as the young women in today's parable had to continue their daily living until the bridegroom returned (all of them, even the wise ones, went to sleep that night!), in all seasons we go about our lives faithfully, even as we wait with eager longing.

Many generations after the telling of this parable, how are we living as people prepared for the coming of Christ? How are we opening our daily lives to the possibilities that Christ will come among us at any moment? We are invited to live with eager expectation, watchful for the grace and love of God through Jesus Christ, which meets us when we least expect it.

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