

## Don't Miss Your Chance

*This Week's Readings at Mass*

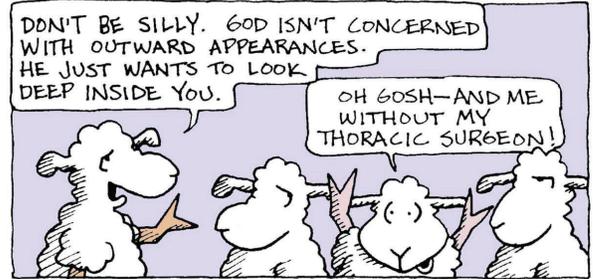
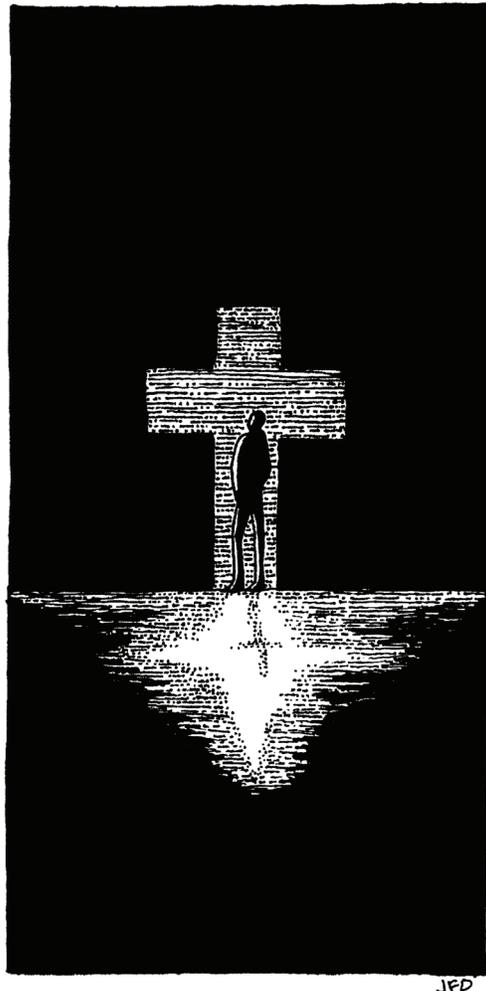
- ▶ Isaiah 63:16b-17, 19b; 64:2-7 - Prayer for the return of God's favor
- ▶ 1 Corinthians 1:3-9 - Thanksgiving
- ▶ Mark 13:33-37 - Need for watchfulness

As Advent begins, we hear Jesus warn his listeners—and us—to be alert and watchful. What are we to be watching and waiting for? In the Gospels, Jesus was referring to his Second Coming and the end of the world as we know it. In fact, the apostles and his early friends and followers were so certain that Jesus was returning soon that they believed it would happen in their lifetimes.

Now, 2,000 years later, we sometimes take for granted that the world probably isn't about to end anytime soon, despite the COVID pandemic, natural disasters, and racial tensions of 2020. Yet maybe Jesus is still calling us to be alert to all of the opportunities we have to love and be loved right now, today, because we don't know how much time we have left on this earth.

It is common to hear victims of natural disasters or tragic violence say, "I never imagined this would happen to us. I never imagined this would happen here." Maybe part of what they are saying is that they were sleepwalking through life, taking their lives and the lives of their loved ones for granted.

If we knew we only had a short time left to live, how would we want to spend our remaining time? What



"Would that you might meet us doing right."

### Sheepish Question:

How will I present myself when Jesus comes to me this Advent?

if we knew our child or spouse or parent would be taken from us soon? How might our priorities change? Even if we aren't motivated to stay watchful for the end of this world, Jesus is still calling us to be alert so that we don't miss the opportunities to love and serve the people of this world while we have the chance. What is passing us by because we are too busy and distracted to notice?

## Questions of the Week

① Every few years a small Christian group predicts that the end of the world is in sight. We might not pay much attention, but how would you live life differently if you only had a few weeks or days to live? What would you change? What concrete actions would you take?

② In what particular area(s) of your life do you take things for granted? How could you change?

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