

Are you ready?

that phrase, at this time of year, means one thing in this room and something completely different beyond this walls ...

Are you ready for Christmas?

Might mean...

...have you done

the shopping

the baking

the wrapping

the cards

the decorating

the tree

the cleaning

the pictures w Santa

and this is just the start of the list.

Yet, what's on the list for the getting ready for the coming of Christ?

How do we prepare our hearts, our minds, our souls, our very being for Christ?

How do we get ready?

I pray you hear no judgement in that ...

I scramble to be ready just like many of you.

I scramble to find a way to make all things right BY MYSELF.

Because maybe if I get this all right, then it will be perfect and the new age will dawn and birds will sing and world peace will ensue.

That is ridiculous of course because in all that getting ready - I leave little room for God.

Where is the space for love, for God to be born again?

Advent says

IT CAN BE DIFFERENT.

Advent is, beloved, about letting loose of our plans and allowing ourselves to be disrupted.

Advent is allowing ourselves to move our attention away from having the perfect Christmas or being the perfect Christian.

So, we can receive the change God brings in the world.

Here is what I have been considering ...

Beloved, we can never be ready.

Because we are all works in progress

Because we all people on a journey

All of us

[Having just come back from Atlanta - as we say in the south **all you all.**]

All you all. This Advent God wants us to be disrupted.

+ + +

Disruption makes a great case for waiting ...

I have waited for loads of things

Phone calls
bread to rise
kettles to boil
ordination
test results

I've waited with people who were dying and living

In fact, much of a priest's life is waiting ...

I pretty bad at it.

I am learning but it is slow

Waiting on God, means for me learning to let go,

learning to release my life, my time, my intentions, even my goodwill to God.

The release, the letting go, is what fascinates and draws me into the contemplative life
to centering prayer

to silence

all places I practice waiting and I need a lot of practice.

And us, this Advent?

will we wait with expectation of a certain outcome or can we appreciate the expanse of
unknowing?

Maybe this Advent I can wait.

Maybe I can wait to be shaped by God, formed by God, as a vessel for something new.

So that I can be disrupted.

In contrast to most of what we see around us - all the getting ready;

let's just practice be awake

to be shaped and formed
to be showered with grace
to be filled with light
to be disrupted

We have this teeter totter relationship with God.

A relationship where we know God's love and power and
where we also know God's distance and absence.

Advent waiting reckons that tension. Reckons that tension with disruption.

Our year, this Advent, begins with God desire to disrupt us.

Disruption is generally assumed to be a bad thing – annoying and intrusive.

We think of disruption as interruption – an irritation.
I've had this very strong image of God like a persistent child tugging perpetually at our pant leg.
Begging us stop, look around, and see what is happening.
That is the promise of Advent with all its disruptive, unpredictability.
Advent returns and interrupts the methodical, the routine, the just going through our days
doing the next thing on the list, lives. The disruption of Advent seeks to stop us from hurrying
off to the next thing.

Our Gospel cries out to us ... look up at the sky ...
see how what was, is going to be wonderfully and beautifully remade.
The words of Mark interrupt us,
get our attention.
The son of man in glory will come AFTER
that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will
be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

this is very different that birds singing and world peace us when I'm in control of the universe.

+ + +

Much like Mark's Gospel, last year events in our world have clamored for our attention:

wars and rumors of wars
fires
mass shootings
earthquakes
hurricanes
political unrest
social disruptions
the losses of those we love

and yet
Advent says to us again:
Wait and be disrupted in anticipation of Christ.

When we are too busy with all the getting ready we avoid being disrupted, we escape the
interruption.

Advent allows us to be disrupted for the coming of Christ.

the coming of love
the coming of hope
the coming of forgiveness and mercy
the coming of justice

Advent allows us to be disrupted by God for God's sake.

We are a people of short attention spans and good intentions.

God knows this about God's people.
That's why Advent comes again.

So, we might hear the call to be disrupted, to be interrupted.
So, we might be disrupted to be disruptors –all for the cause of love and peace and righteousness.

When we are disturbed, we are available – we are available for God to break in.

Often, we are asleep and if uninterrupted we slumber on!
[I've lived with teenagers who could indeed sleep all day]
Asleep we are unprepared to receive the love God has prepared for us since the beginning of the world.

This Advent be disrupted and encourage disruption with those you meet.
Disruption is how we know we are awake to God and to God's purpose.
Disruption means we are present and accounted for – waiting for Christ's return.

a blessed advent of disruption to **all you all!**