



# IMMACULATE HEART<sup>OF</sup>MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH

## A LETTER FROM THE PASTOR DECEMBER 2, 2018

Dear friends in the Coming Lord,

We're not very good at waiting. Maybe we never were, but in this instant-everything age, we get frustrated if we have to wait for *anything*. Just the other day, I heard myself complaining about a package I'd ordered that hadn't arrived yet. (It had been 3 whole days.) And there are not words to describe my frustration at having waited almost 6 months for DeKalb to issue a building permit for our new rectory! Waiting feels like time wasted. And who can afford to waste time?

But Advent is all about waiting. We're reminded of the centuries when God's people awaited the fulfillment of God's promises. This side of Christmas, it's easy to think that this season is all about arrival. And that's partly true. Advent contemplates Jesus' triumphant return at the end of the ages; and it finds its culmination in celebrating his first coming in the flesh. But let's not forget the waiting that preceded that first advent.

A little waiting is a good thing. Here are a few things that I think we can get from waiting:

**Waiting reminds us that we're not the center of the universe.** It's easy to get caught up in our own plans, convinced that everything we do is crucially important. Being forced to wait gives us the opportunity to consider that other people have plans and priorities, too. That doesn't make our plans unimportant, but it does put them into perspective.

**Waiting reminds us that God is in control.** At the very least, waiting forces us to realize that *we* are *not* in control. And that can be a valuable opportunity to reflect on who *is*.

**Waiting reminds us that life is a gift.** Forced to sit at a stop light for several precious minutes, I have a choice. I can choose to grumble and gripe about the loss of my precious time, or I can remember that those minutes were a gift God gave me so that I might have the opportunity to live for his glory. Sure, this wasn't how I'd planned to use them. But that doesn't change the gift.

**Waiting reminds us that the future is bigger than we think.** We have fleeting moments of awareness of our own mortality, and being forced to wait can trigger them. We have a finite amount of time; why waste any of it waiting for things to happen? But, of course, our time isn't really finite. We're destined for eternity. Waiting can remind us that this life is part of something much larger.

Will any of that change the way you feel as you burn through forty-five minutes waiting for the doctor to call you in for your appointment? I don't know. But maybe it will invite you to experience these Advent days a little more richly.