

October 22, 2025

Daily Reflections



EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED

By Sister Jane DeLisle, CSJ

An Excerpt from Today's Gospel

Jesus said to his disciples:

“Be sure of this:

if the master of the house had known the hour

when the thief was coming,

he would not have let his house be broken into.

You also must be prepared,

for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come.”

LUKE 12:39-40

Reflection

As I read this scripture, I remembered times when I was surprised by happenings that interrupted and changed my well-ordered life. While being a

planner, I am also flexible. I can roll with chance encounters, shift my expectations, and adapt to the urgency of the moment. I see all this as engaging life as an adventure.

Ten years ago, my dad experienced sudden and serious health issues that resulted in emergency surgery, and a long hospital stay. My brothers, sister and I rose to the occasion. When he was finally released from the hospital, I left him in my brother's capable care. Since Dad was out of danger, I resumed my plans to lead a pilgrimage to the founding places of the Sisters of St. Joseph in France. No sooner did I arrive home than my sister-in-law called to inform me that my dad had suddenly died in my brother's arms. Shock, confusion, the dreaded reality and finality of the moment. Everything changed in an instant! The "unexpected visitor" had come to take my dad home to God's embrace. Shock, surprise, sudden grief! That which I had feared most was a reality.

Of course, one never really knows when our time on this earth will end. But in hindsight, my dad had had a sense of the impending end, and I had missed the signs. In the blink of an eye, life changed radically for us all. Grief took hold, and we shifted into an unfamiliar and unexpected response to the circumstances. Yet we all embraced the reality. One thing is clear; God was tangibly present.

As I consider what it means to be ready, I realize that faithfulness plays a key role in life. Being faithful in our daily routines, work, and spiritual life helps us stay prepared for opportunities, challenges, and the ultimate reality of going home to God. As witnessed in the sudden loss of my father, faithfulness to the relationships within the family and as people of God had unknowingly prepared us. It is in the insignificant things, the attentive listening, the quiet presence, the kind words and gestures, small moments or significant ones -- knowing that we serve a faithful God helps us respond as needed in the moment.

That which we had feared most, losing our parents, had come about quite suddenly, yet we were ready. Hindsight is a wonderful teacher. God was with us as we were present and available to one another and rallied around supporting our mother.

Compassionate presence of family, friends, and community revealed God's abiding presence and gentle strength, carrying us through the difficult loss. Being prepared has a whole new meaning for me. Fidelity to a conscious belonging first to God opens me to whatever is needed in the moment.



You also must be prepared,
for at an hour you do not expect,
The Son of Man will come.

Luke 12:40

For Pondering

- What surprises have interrupted your life?
 - Where did you discover God's abiding presence?
 - What enables you to be alert or prepared for the inbreaking of God?
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For Prayer

God of Surprises, as I recall this loss, my heart feels heavy, and the absence of my loved one leaves an ache I cannot put into words. Yet I turn to You, the One who brings light even in the darkest moments.

*Help me to trust that You are present, weaving purpose into the sorrow.
Teach me to see the unexpected ways You bring comfort—through the kindness of others, the beauty of a memory, or the quiet peace that only You can provide.*

Prepare my heart for the journey ahead. Help me to embrace the changes that

loss brings, to find strength in You, and to be ready for the new paths You may place before me. Open my eyes to the ways You are shaping me, even now, for the future You have planned.

Thank You for the gift of their life, and for the ways they touched mine. May I honor their memory by living with courage, grace, and a heart prepared for the blessings and challenges to come.

Amen.

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