

Bringing Home the Word

First Sunday of Advent (B)
November 29, 2026

How Has God Shaped You?

Fr. Joseph Juknialis

Sometimes it seems as if life is a laboratory of designed experiments on how to become human, all of them allotted ten-year blocks.

Have you noticed how nine- and ten-year-olds can be easy to be around? Then, about the time we've gotten being a kid down to a science, life begins to move us into adolescence. We want to be independent and responsible, but we don't yet have all the skills. We have sexual feelings, but we're expected not to act on them. About the time we reach adulthood and move into our twenties, it seems we can finally do what we want, but then we might drink too much, spend too much, drive too fast, and party too long. Once we begin to settle down around year thirty, we have to learn how to live with another person. One likes it warm; the other cool. One seeks to save; the other spends. One is a homebody; the other enjoys going out on the town. By the time we've gotten to our sixties and seventies, we may have figured out life, but by then we've used up most of our energy.

What's going on?

Faith suggests it's the hand of God shaping us into the sort of persons we're meant to be. "Lord, you are our father; we are the clay and you our potter: we are all the work of your hand" (Isaiah 64:7). Advent may be a time to figure out how God is acting in your life now and look back to see that God has been shaping you all along. ✝



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Sunday Readings

Isaiah 63:16b–17, 19b; 64:2–7

Lord, you are our father; we are the clay and you our potter: we are all the work of your hand.

1 Corinthians 1:3–9

God is faithful, and by him you were called to fellowship with his Son.

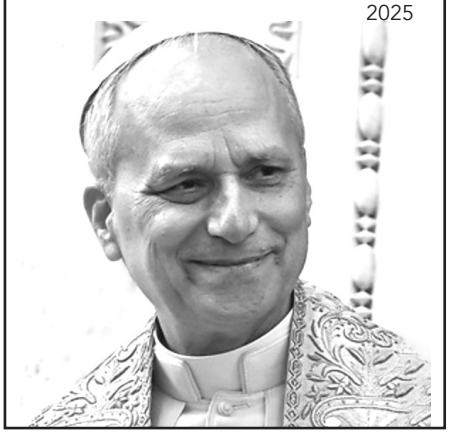
Mark 13:33–37

[Jesus said,] "May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping."

A Word from Pope Leo XIV

We journey as if on a bridge that connects Earth to heaven, a bridge that the Lord has built for us. Let us always keep our eyes fixed on both shores, so that we may love God and our brothers and sisters with all our hearts in order to journey together and find ourselves one day united in the house of the Father.

HOMILY, ISTANBUL, NOVEMBER 29, 2025



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Can I recall a time when I saw God acting in my life?
- Do I see God acting in my life today?

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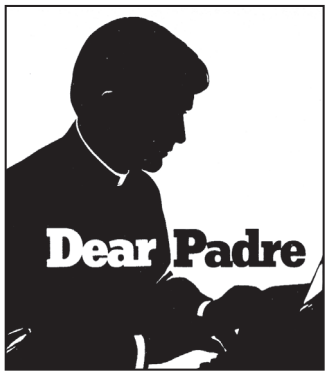

Dear Padre,
Why are the Gospels of Matthew and Mark so alike? Why did the Church keep both gospels when so much of Mark seems to be a mirror image of Matthew?

The gospels were written over time and used by the faithful when they gathered for worship. They read the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) and accounts of the life and ministry of Jesus collected by Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

The Christian communities were often great distances from one another. A community may have had access to only one of these accounts. There is considerable similarity because the gospel writers depended on one another. All three of these gospels include some of the same incidents, and each one also has incidents or details unique to that gospel.

These were not the only accounts written about the life and ministry of Jesus. At some point, the Church had to decide which should be considered the inspired word of God. There were four accounts that were widely used: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. With their similarities and differences, the Church accepted these four accounts as gospel—the Good News. ✝

The Redemptorists / DearPadre.org

Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to ***DearPadre.org*** to send your question and to learn more about ***Dear Padre***.

Wisdom from Catholic Update

From *The Joy of Advent: Grace Through Waiting* by Patricia Livingston

Advent. A strong wind is blowing. An adventure is in the air. Someone is coming. The curious energy of Advent is that we are looking for something we know is already here. It is both right now and not yet. We sing "O Come, O Come Emmanuel," yet Emmanuel means "God is with us."

The days of Advent are like the intriguing little doors on an Advent calendar. Each one opens to reveal some aspect of Christmas…beauty, kindness, prayer, humor, insight, memory, encounter, music, and Scripture. What doors will you open this season?

Catholic Update—a subscription newsletter published eleven times a year—explores Church tradition and teaching on contemporary topics. For more information, call 800-325-9521 or visit Liguori.org.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, so that we may be patient in our waiting and energetic in our service, we pray—Be born in us, be born in our world.

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

November 30–
December 5

Monday, St. Andrew, Rom 10:9–18 / Mt 4:18–22

Tuesday, Advent Weekday, Is 11:1–10 / Lk 10:21–24

Wednesday, Advent Weekday, Is 25:6–10a / Mt 15:29–37

Thursday, St. Francis Xavier, Is 26:1–6 / Mt 7:21, 24–27

Friday, Advent Weekday, Is 29:17–24 / Mt 9:27–31

Saturday, Advent Weekday, Is 30:19–21, 23–26 / Mt 9:35—10:1, 5a, 6–8

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