GOSPEL MEDITATION - ENCOURAGE DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE

November 29, 2026
First Sunday of Advent
Mark 13:33-37

A friend once told me, “When I was young, I was so broke, I couldn’t even pay attention.” It’s a clever line. Even when your pockets are empty, you can still be attentive. And yet, we often find creative ways to spend our attention on anything but what matters most.

We begin the season of Advent with Jesus’ words about how we maintain our attention. He says, **“What I say to you, I say to all: ‘Watch!’” (Mark 13:37).** He describes servants waiting for their master’s return. Their task is simple: stay alert. Be ready to open the door, welcome him, and serve. That is why they’re there. Advent reminds us that this is the purpose of our lives, too. God is coming to us. The question is whether we are awake and ready to receive him.

How do we train our attention for God? One powerful way is the age-old Christian practice of vigils. Praying in the quiet stillness of night — free from all distraction — focuses the heart and awakens a deeper awareness of God’s presence. This Advent, watch for the coming of the Lord by the practice of vigils. Not in theory, but concretely. The Lord is coming. The awake, attentive heart will recognize Him.

— *Father John Muir*

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