

# Dear Padre,

*At a recent gathering, a relative questioned my family's continued participation in the Catholic Church because of the sexual abuse cover-up. What is the best way to address this question?*

Resist the temptation to argue or make any response that is not respectful. Choose to respond with empathy and understanding; perhaps something like this: "I understand and respect your feelings. Some have made the difficult choice to leave the Church. Others find the choice to remain also difficult.

"As a mature and discerning person, I am not making excuses for behaviors that are inexcusable. I cannot and will not defend behavior that should not be defended. I choose to remain in the Church because I choose to remain in a relationship with Jesus, and that relationship includes my reception of the sacraments of the Church. I value the sacraments even as I remain vigilant about the conduct of those who have been entrusted with celebrating those sacraments. I retain my practice of the sacraments and, at the same time, I retain my responsibility to be alert to abusive behavior. This is not acceptance or approval of what most certainly happened. It is continuing to participate in what is beautiful and wise and true so that, in the company of other believers, I may become more like Christ." ●

Fr. Thomas M. Santa, CSSR / DearPadre.org

## Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to [DearPadre.org](http://DearPadre.org) to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.

## A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV

*I would like that our first great desire be for a united Church, a sign of unity and communion, which becomes a leaven for a reconciled world. [We see] too much discord, too many wounds caused by hatred, violence, prejudice, the fear of difference, and an economic paradigm that exploits the Earth's resources and marginalizes the poorest.*

HOMILY, ROME,  
MAY 18, 2025



JULIA-M-CAMERON / PEXELS

**Monday**  
September 22  
Weekday  
Ezr 1:1-6  
Lk 8:16-18

**Tuesday**  
September 23  
St. Pius of  
Pietrelcina, Priest  
Ezr 6:7-8, 12b,  
14-20  
Lk 8:19-21

**Wednesday**  
September 24  
Weekday  
Ezr 9:5-9  
Lk 9:1-6  
**Thursday**  
September 25  
Weekday  
Hg 1:1-8  
Lk 9:7-9

**Friday**  
September 26  
Weekday  
Hg 2:1-9  
Lk 9:18-22  
**Saturday**  
September 27  
St. Vincent de Paul,  
Priest  
Zec 2:5-9, 14-15a  
Lk 9:43b-45  
**Sunday**  
September 28  
Twenty-sixth Sunday  
in Ordinary Time  
Am 6:1a, 4-7  
1 Tm 6:11-16  
Lk 16:19-31



JOHN MC ELROY

# Our Parish COMMUNITY

September 21, 2025

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

Amos 8:4-7 / 1 Timothy 2:1-8 / Luke 16:1-13 or 16:10-13



## Wanting to Be Wanted

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

**M**ore than anything, we want to be wanted.

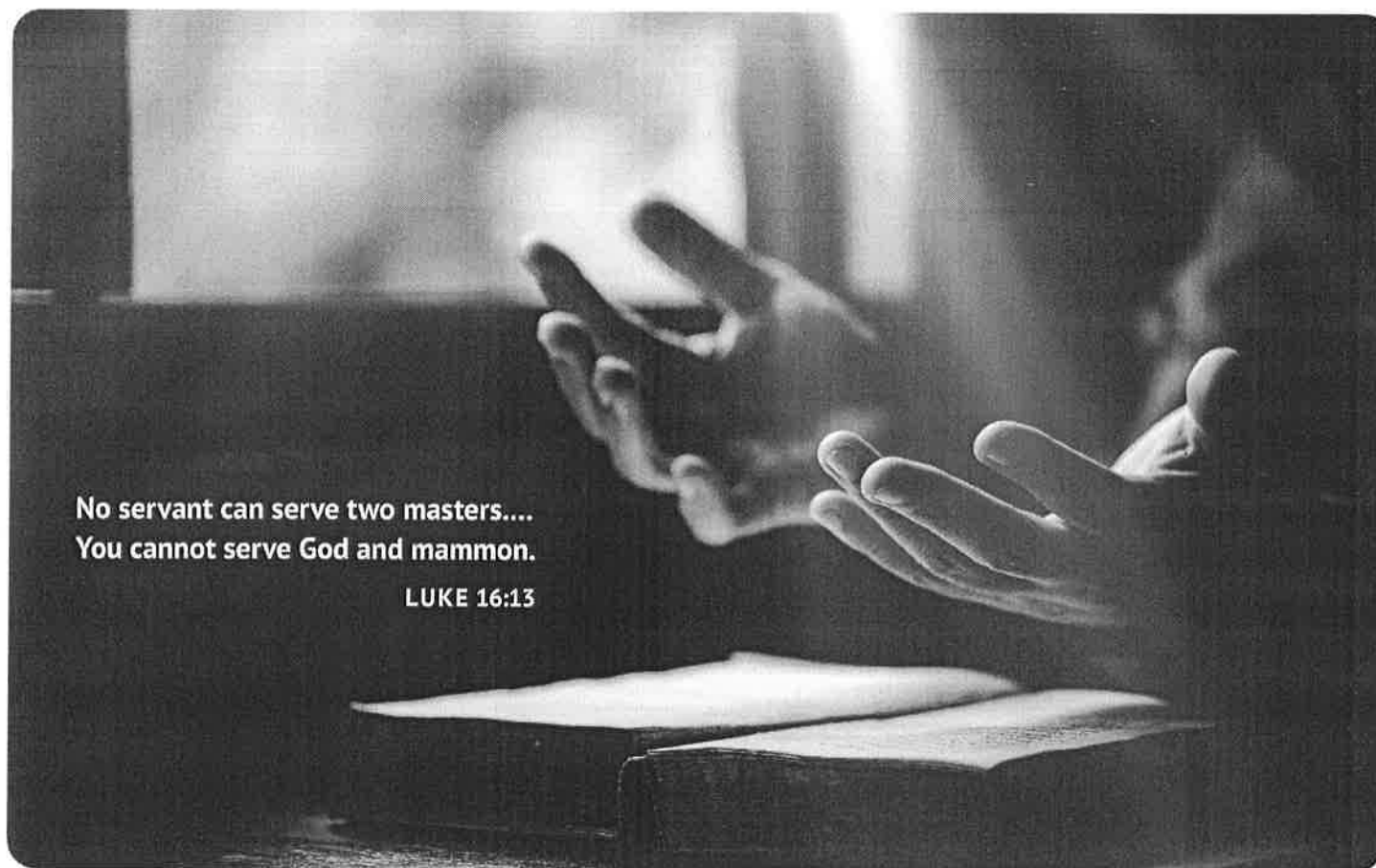
As infants, we reach out, wanting to be wanted. When we begin school and discover others who might be friends, we want to be wanted. As teenagers discovering the stirrings of something new and deep, we want to be wanted. And when we grow old, then still we want to be wanted.

The parables Jesus told were always about how God moves in our lives, how God is powerfully intertwined in all that is. Jesus told parables to give us a hint of where to find God. This Sunday's parable is about a rich man with a steward about to be dismissed. The steward then finds ways to ingratiate himself into others' lives so when he is dismissed, he won't be left

out in the cold. It's not the rich man who is the God-person in the parable. The rich got rich by abusing the poor. Rather, it is the steward who is the image of God—a God who, like the steward, is desperate to be accepted, to find a way into our lives. We might say clever...or even sneaky. It is God who finds a way into our lives when we are afraid, when we face the loss of love, when our worlds are falling apart, when we go looking for him. There, then, is God, eagerly wanting to be wanted.●

### Reflect

*What do I do when I'm feeling unwanted?  
Do I recognize that God wants me?*



No servant can serve two masters....  
You cannot serve God and mammon.

LUKE 16:13