

November 29, 2026

First Sunday of Advent

Written by
THE FAITHFUL DISCIPLE

Is 63:16b-17, 19b; 64:2-7 | 1 Cor 1:3-9 | Mk 13:33-37

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

As a parent and a former teacher, I know that one of the best ways to encourage good behavior in children is to catch them doing what is right and to praise them for it. Eager to please, children will do more of what gets them positive attention or reward. The prophet Isaiah tells us that, like a good parent, God will abundantly bless his children whom he finds doing right upon his return: "No ear has ever heard, nor eye ever seen, any God but you doing such deeds for those who wait for him." Scripture tells us that we can't even imagine what awaits those whom God finds living faithful to his word. Our task, then, is to always be vigilant, as Jesus' words today remind us: "Be watchful! Be alert."

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

As we begin this Advent season, let us reflect on the fact that growth in discipleship might simply be paying more attention to doing what is right in every moment. But we know this is not always easy. We can take encouragement from St. Paul, who tells us today that God has bestowed his grace upon us in Christ Jesus, and that we have been "enriched in every way … so that [we] are not lacking in any spiritual gift as [we] wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ." As we seek to share faith with others, it's helpful to tap into the specific ways God has gifted us. Some of us are great at listening. Others offer encouragement and counsel. Perhaps others know how to explain things in a down-to-earth, easily understandable way. Still others are able to create beautiful things – through art, music, poetry – that draw people to encounter God's beauty and goodness. Think about what gifts God has given you, and find ways to lean into them in a more intentional way as you seek to share your faith with others.

STUDY

This Advent – especially if you've never done so before – take time to discover the spiritual gifts God has given you. Look to see if there is a *Called & Gifted™ Discernment Process* (Catherine of Siena Institute) being offered in your area, or another suitable spiritual gifts discernment workshop. This process will help you to grow in self-knowledge and to uncover the ways that God has uniquely gifted you to live your discipleship in the world.