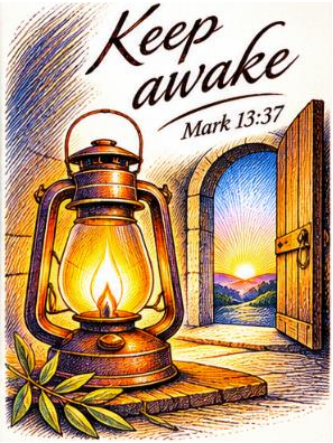
The Art of Staying Awake

Isaiah 63:16b–17; 64:1, 3–8 · Psalm 80 · 1 Corinthians 1:3–9 · Mark 13:33–37



Advent begins not with the sweetness of the Christmas story, but with a wake-up call. Jesus asks us to remain watchful because we do not know when the master of the house will return.

It is possible to go through life with our eyes wide open and yet be spiritually asleep. We become so accustomed to our routines, responsibilities, and concerns that we stop noticing the quiet ways in which God approaches us. Staying awake is not about living in fear of the future, but about living attentively in the present. It means noticing the person who needs our attention, recognizing an opportunity to forgive, or discovering something sacred in an otherwise ordinary day.

Advent invites us to recover our capacity for wonder, to look beyond the familiar and recognize that God is still at work among us. Perhaps the greatest danger is not that Christ will fail to come, but that he will come and we will fail to notice.

Fr. Efren