

LIVING FAITH

A RESOURCE FOR FAMILIES

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

NOVEMBER 27th, 2016

THE GOSPEL FOR TODAY

Matthew 24:37-44



ROMAN CATHOLIC
ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. JOHN'S



For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man.

Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left.

Two women will be grinding meal together;

one will be taken and one will be left.

Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.

But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.

*Keep awake therefore, for you do not know
on what day your Lord is coming.*



REFLECTION ON THE GOSPEL

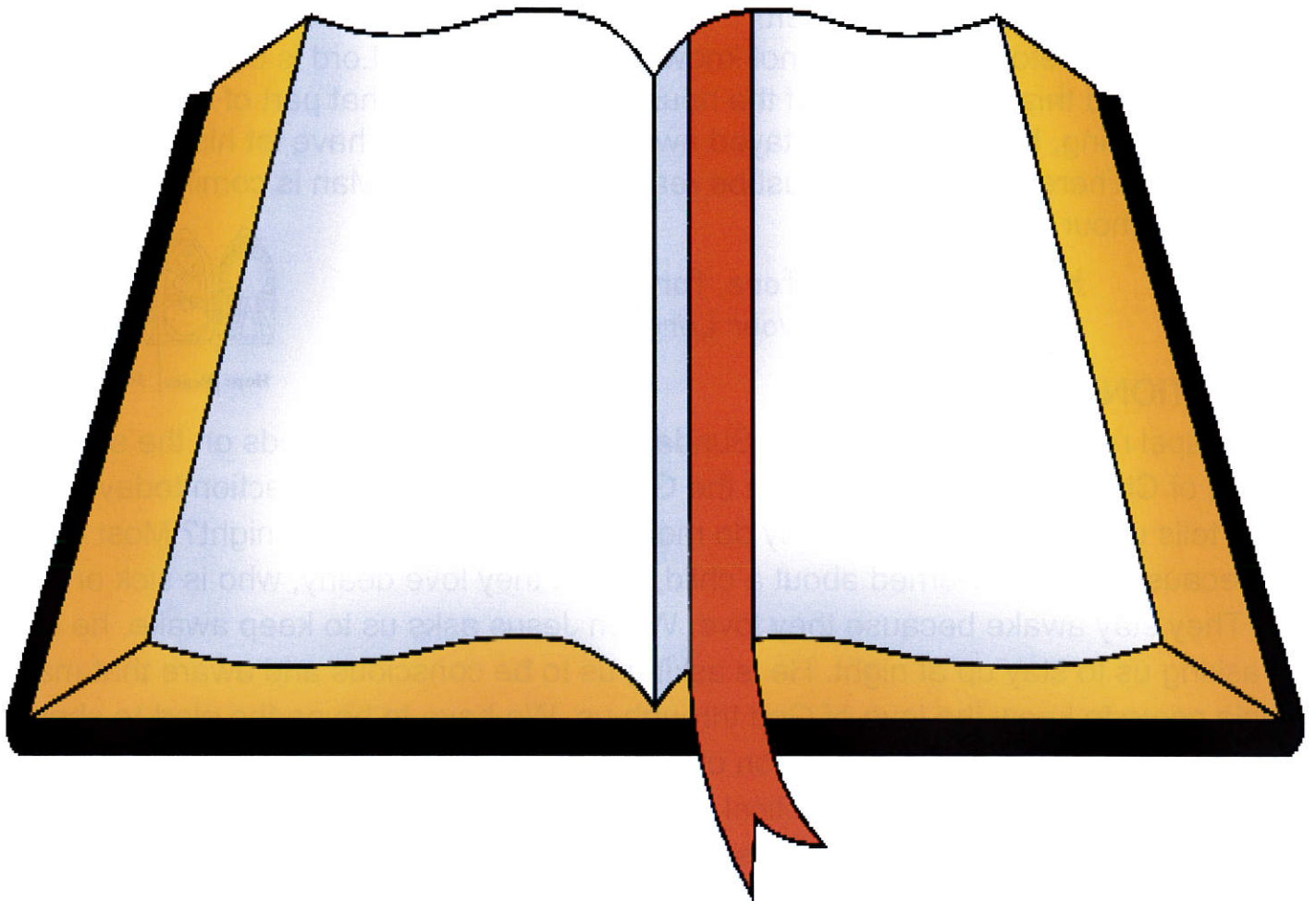
The Gospel readings for the last few Sundays have focused our minds on the second coming of Christ at the end of time. In the Gospel offered for our reflection today, Jesus tells us to “Keep awake.” Why do most parents stay awake at night? Most often it is because they are worried about a child, whom they love dearly, who is sick or out late. They stay awake because they love. When Jesus asks us to keep awake, he is not asking us to stay up at night. He is asking us to be conscious and aware that many people come to know the love of God through us. We have to be on the alert to show people the great love and compassion of God. We have to be always looking for people who are in need of our practical love. Jesus stands before you today, cleverly disguised as a neighbour, a friend or someone who needs your assistance. Stay awake, and do not let Him pass you by!

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WRITING YOUR OWN BIBLE A FAMILY ACTIVITY

There are four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Each Gospel was written by a different person, at a different time, for a different audience. Therefore, although there are some common elements, there are also some very different features. For example, all the Gospel writers tell the story of Jesus' crucifixion, death and resurrection. Other than these very important parts, the only other stories shared by all four Gospel writers are John the Baptist and his preaching, the baptism of Jesus, Jesus' rejection at Nazareth, and the feeding of the five thousand. However, only the Gospel of Luke tells the familiar story of the Annunciation, how Mary learned from the Angel Gabriel that she had been chosen to be the mother of God. Did you know that, in Matthew's Gospel, the angel appears to Joseph in a dream, and reveals to him that Mary is to be the mother of God?

For this activity, you are not to use a Bible. Pretend that all the Bibles on earth have been destroyed, and you have been asked to re-construct the Bible, using only your memory! What stories do you remember? (hint—you can use key words to identify the story you want to include!)



THE CHURCH TEACHES

The New Testament: From the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*



125. The Gospels are the heart of all the Scriptures "because they are our principal source for the life and teaching of the Incarnate Word, our Saviour".

126 We can distinguish three stages in the formation of the Gospels:

1. **THE LIFE AND TEACHING OF JESUS** . The Church holds firmly that the four Gospels, "whose historicity she unhesitatingly affirms, faithfully hand on what Jesus, the Son of God, while he lived among men, really did and taught for their eternal salvation, until the day when he was taken up."
2. **THE ORAL TRADITION**. "For, after the ascension of the Lord, the apostles handed on to their hearers what he had said and done, but with that fuller understanding which they, instructed by the glorious events of Christ and enlightened by the Spirit of truth, now enjoyed."
3. **THE WRITTEN GOSPELS**. "The sacred authors, in writing the four Gospels, selected certain of the many elements which had been handed on, either orally or already in written form; others they synthesized or explained with an eye to the situation of the churches, the while sustaining the form of preaching, but always in such a fashion that they have told us the honest truth about Jesus."

	MARK	MATTHEW	LUKE	JOHN
Writer	Possibly a follower of Peter	A Jewish Christian; traditionally the apostle Matthew	A Gentile Christian; Paul's traveling companion	The beloved disciple; the apostle John
Date Written	AD 65-70	AD 75-80	AD 80-85	AD 90-110
Image of Jesus	Suffering Servant, Son of Man, Son of God, Messiah, Lord	Teacher and prophet like Moses, Son of God, Son of Man, Messiah and Lord	Great healer, merciful, compassion for the poor, Son of God, Son of Man, Messiah and Lord	Logos, Word of God, Son of God, Son of Man, Lamb of God, Redeemer, Messiah, and Lord.
The Author's Community	A Gentile Christian community in Rome undergoing persecution	A Jewish Christian community in Antioch, Syria	Written to Theophilus (meaning "lover of God"), who possibly represents any Gentile Christian	Community of Jews, Gentiles and Samaritans of Ephesus in Turkey
Historical Situation	The Romans subdue armed Jewish rebellions. Christians experience persecutions in Rome.	Written after Romans had destroyed all of Jerusalem, including the Temple of Herod	Written when the persecution of Jews and Christians was intensifying	Emperor Domitian deified himself and mandated that all people worship him. Jewish leaders banned Christians from synagogues.

WALKING TOWARD CHRISTMAS

BUILD YOUR CHRISTMAS CRIB PIECE BY PIECE, AND SO PREPARE FOR CHRISTMAS

advent week one

**CONSIDER THE STABLE, EMPTY AND BARE.
WAITING FOR LOVE TO COME AND DWELL THERE.**

Place an empty stable in a place in your home where everyone will see it. This is the home that will soon receive life and love, where God will come to dwell at Christmas. *(But save all the Nativity Figures—we will be placing them in the stable, piece by piece, over the coming weeks!)*

in the empty stable below, write some of your own hopes and dreams... what do you ask of Jesus this advent?

