

# BRINGING HOME THE GOSPEL

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November 29, 2020 • First Sunday of Advent • Mark 13:33-37

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## Keep Awake

*Jesus tells his disciples a story about a gatekeeper who was told to watch carefully for his master's return. The gatekeeper is warned that the time or day of the man's return is unknown, and so he must be watchful. He is cautioned to stay alert and not be caught sleeping.*

**T**his Gospel from Mark is read on the First Sunday of Advent, the season we prepare to celebrate Christmas. And Mark certainly isn't subtle in telling us how to get ready. His Gospel almost shouts, "Keep awake, pay attention." Fortunately, being on guard and staying alert is something parents know all about.

With five children under ten (three under three at one point), I was on guard at all times. When they were infants, my eyes were always alert for open basement doors, sharp or breakable items and choking hazards. The teen years required even more vigilance. We needed to be alert for subtler hazards. Some questions became standard: Where are you going? Who will you be with? When will you be home?

In the weeks ahead, consider staying alert in other ways. Discover where God is in your everyday life. On Christmas we celebrate more than Jesus' birth. It is a celebration of Jesus alive today, all around us in all of creation and especially in his people. And it is a celebration that Jesus, in all his glory, will come again.

Look carefully. Be alert to where Jesus can be found in your life. Recognize him in the faces of your children, friends, coworkers, and be especially

vigilant in finding Jesus in the faces of those you would rather ignore. Whenever possible, help your children understand that Jesus is all around them, especially in the people he loves.

Find Jesus in your own heart, and be vigilant for opportunities to share his love with your family and the people you encounter in your everyday life. Stay alert!

### FAMILY RESPONSE

Ask family members to talk about their hopes for the year ahead. Decide as a family on a New Year's resolution.

### PERSONAL RESPONSE

On the lines below write down your hopes and dreams for the year ahead. Also make note of the family's resolution. What do you want to remember from last year? What are you looking forward to next week? What are your concerns?