



Woe to those who
are complacent....
[T]hey shall be
the first to go
into exile.

AMOS 6:1, 7



Adrift

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

In *A Christmas Carol*, Ebenezer Scrooge found himself confronted by the person he had become: someone forced to accept the reality painted by the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Yet to Come. Scrooge hadn't realized how he had slowly drifted into becoming an uncaring and greedy person, unable to show compassion because he never really saw someone else's pain. The story of Ebenezer Scrooge is the story of the rich man in this Sunday's gospel who was unmoved by poor Lazarus, sitting at the gate of the rich man's sumptuous life. They are both stories of human beings drifting into emptiness.

St. Thomas Aquinas suggested that our motivations in life can ultimately be reduced to eight different categories. If we're interested in understanding what sort of people we are becoming, we might ask

ourselves which of these questions best describes our motivation: Am I making my decisions and choices about life based on wealth? Or am I looking to be admired by others and be praised? Is it lasting glory that I seek? Or power so that I can be noted for "making a difference?" Is what I seek a life of ultimate pleasure and comfort? Is it health that I look for? Or perhaps something related to my inner life—some intangible good, like virtue or knowledge? Or is it to see God already in this life what I truly want? It is always a challenge to know our true selves because all too often we may be adrift, unaware of who we are becoming. ●

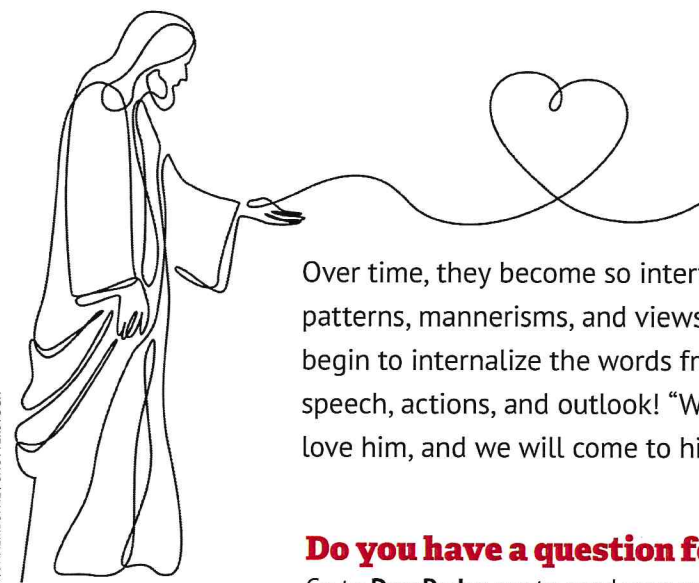
Reflect

Which of St. Thomas Aquinas' questions describes me and my choices?

Dear Padre,

Why does my parish priest preach about love practically every Sunday?

“Through the course of the liturgical year, the homily sets forth the mysteries of faith and the standards of the Christian life on the basis of the sacred text” (*Lectionary*, 24). A translation of the English word “love” appears in the Bible more than 500 times; by comparison, “sin” appears approximately 400 times. Thus, insofar as the homily “should be an explanation of some aspect of the readings from sacred Scripture” (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, 65), God’s word on “love” is far too prevalent to overlook.



Pope Francis called God’s word “a love letter, written to us by the One who knows us best.” In the Bible, this God who desires to bestow his love on us (See 1 John 3:1), is essentially telling us, “How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.” How we love God in return may be likened to two partners in a committed relationship.

Over time, they become so intertwined that they can even assume each other’s speech patterns, mannerisms, and views. Likewise, for those who love God, over the years we can begin to internalize the words from God’s “love letter” and reflect them in our Christian speech, actions, and outlook! “Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him” (John 14:23). ●

Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR / DearPadre.org

Do you have a question for the Padre?

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A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV

In our day, there is a widespread thirst for justice, a desire for authentic fatherhood and motherhood, a profound longing for spirituality, especially among young people and the marginalized, who do not always find effective means of making their needs known. There is a growing demand for the Church’s social doctrine, to which we need to respond.

ADDRESS, ROME, MAY 17, 2025

Monday

September 29
Sts. Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael, Archangels
Dn 7:9–10, 13–14 or
Rv 12:7–12ab
Jn 1:47–51

Tuesday

September 30
St. Jerome, Priest and Doctor of the Church
Zec 8:20–23
Lk 9:51–56

Wednesday

October 1
St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus, Virgin and Doctor of the Church
Neh 2:1–8
Lk 9:57–62

Thursday

October 2
The Holy Guardian Angels
Neh 8:1–4a, 5–6, 7b–12
Mt 18:1–5, 10

Friday

October 3
Weekday
Bar 1:15–22
Lk 10:13–16

Saturday

October 4
St. Francis of Assisi
Bar 4:5–12, 27–29
Lk 10:17–24

Sunday

October 5
Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time
Hb 1:2–3; 2:2–4
2 Tm 1:6–8, 13–14
Lk 17:5–10