Advent 2026

Totally love him
who gave Himself totally
out of love for you.
St Clare of Assisi

Being – Listening and Living
in the Sacred Word – 2026

Bob Mitchell, ofm

Introduction

To a Reflective Advent – 2026

God gave each of us the gift
of an imagination and expects
us to use it during this
holy season of Advent
I propose that we do that.
How?
By assuming the roles of the
various characters we meet
in the Parables. We do this by
answering a series of questions
and reflecting upon our answers.

NOTE: Please read the parable before answering questions.

Each day we pray:

Opening Prayer

Loving and eternal God
you gave each of us the
great gift of an imagination,
please energize it as we
reflect on the various characters
found in your parables.
Amen

Closing Prayer

We give thanks to you
our heavenly Father
for helping to use your
gift to reflect on the
characters found in the
Parables as we make our
way through Advent 2026.
Amen

Advent Day One

Parable of the Prodigal Son - #1

Lk.15,11-31

Imagine You are the father in the story.

Answer the following questions and reflect on your answers.

1. How lovingly aware are you of your two sons?
2. As their father do you have a concern about their personality?
3. What do you do to help your duty-bound elder son?
4. How do you treat your frivolous younger son?
5. How do you react to the prodigal's request for his inheritance while you are still alive?
6. During his absence how did you feel?
7. When he finally came home why did you respond the way you did?
8. Why did you respond to your elder son he way you did?

What did you learn about yourself?

Advent Day Two

Parable of the Prodigal Son - #2

Lk.15,11-31

Imagine You are the elder son in the story.

Answer the following questions and reflect upon your answers.

1. Why do I feel so duty-bound to work on my Father's estate?
2. Why does my brother's behavior bother me so much?
3. What do I do to curb my anger and displeasure toward him?
4. Why am I so dumbfounded when I hear him ask our father for his part of our inheritance?
5. Do I finally feel relief when he finally takes off for distant places?
6. What are my feelings about the reception our father gives him on his return after squandering his part of our inheritance?
7. Why do I respond to my father the way I do when he invites me to join the celebration?
8. Do I ever allow myself to be reconciled?

What did you learn about yourself?

Advent Day Three

Parable of the Prodigal Son - #3

Lk.15,11-31

Imagine You are the prodigal son in the story.

Answer the following questions and reflect upon your answers.

1. How aware of your frivolous nature in comparison with your steadfast elder brother?
2. Does it bother you at all that you leave most of the work to him while you go off with your friends?
3. How do you deal with your brother's anger toward you?
4. How do you respond to his complaints and grumpiness towards you?
5. Are you moved at all by his response to you asking for his part of the inheritance?
6. Do you miss him at all while he is gone?
7. Are you willing to eventually become reconciled with your brother?

What did you learn about yourself?

Advent Day Four

Parable of the Good Samaritan #1.

Lk. 10, 25-37

Imagine You are the victim in the story.

Answer the following questions and reflect on your answers.

1. Why did you decide to go from Jerusalem to Jericho?
2. Were you aware it was a dangerous walk?
3. Why did you join a group of strangers not knowing who they were?
4. How did you react when they turned on you, taking your money, stripping you naked and nearly killing you before throwing your bleeding and wounded body into a dirty ditch, leaving you to die?
5. How did you feel not being able to breathe and too weak to cry for help?
6. What were your feelings when both a Priest and a Levite passed you by because they did not want to become unclean by touching you.
7. What was your response to the good man, A Samaritan, who cared for you all your needs?

What lesson did you learn?

Advent Day Five

Parable of the Good Samaritan #2

Lk. 10, 25-37

Imagine you are the Good Samaritan in the story.

Answer the following questions and reflect on your answers.

1. As you traveled on the road to Jericho, what were you thinking about?
2. You know the Jews hated you Samaritans, and yet you are in their in their land. How does this affect you?
3. You came to a dangerous part of the road and there you see a naked man in a dirty ditch. How did this sight affect you?
4. You made a positive decision and decided to help him why?
5. When you discovered his near-death condition, you nursed him using oil and wine to treat his wounds. What moved you to do so?
6. You went further by taking him to an inn and paying for his keep. What motivated this?
7. You promised the innkeeper further payment on your return trip. How did you feel about this?

What did you learn about yourself?

Avent Day Six

Parable of the Good Samaritan #3

Lk. 10, 25-37

Imagine you are the Priest in this story.

Answer the following questions and reflect on your answers.

1. On your way up to Jerusalem, to work what were you thinking about?
2. Were you startled at all by seeing a naked man in a ditch?
3. Were you moved at all by seeing his very desperate condition?
4. What caused you to cross to the other side of the road and pass him by?
5. Did your consciousness act at all to your decision? How?
6. How did you justify your decision to pause by a deeply wounded man.
7. Later on, did you ever feel shame for your decision?

What did you learn about yourself?

Advent Day Seven

The parable of the treasure in the field. Mt. 13, 44.

Imagine you are the laborer in the field in this story.

Answer the following questions and reflect on your answers.

1. You were hired by the owner of the field to care for it and nurture it. What are your thoughts and feelings about this?
2. How happy are you about this job? Why?
3. Do you ever get tired or overwhelmed by the constancy of the care? Explain.
4. How surprised were you to make such a discovery hidden in the field?
5. What prompted you to hide it again?
6. You decided to sell everything you had. To raise the money to buy the field. Explain your excitement.
7. What did you plan to do with this found treasure?
8. Did you think of sharing some of the treasure with your poor neighbors?

What did you learn about yourself?

Advent Day Eight

Parable of the Precious Pearl.

Mt. 13, 45-46.

Imagine you are the merchant of this story.

Answer the following questions and reflect on your answers.

1. For years you have been searching for an exceptional Pearl. What was your motivation?
2. Did you ever get discouraged how did this affect you?
3. Did your disappointment ever suggest to give up searching?
4. In the long run, what really motivated you to keep up the search?
5. One day you came upon what you were looking for. How deeply did you react to the find?
6. What emotional response did the find drawn forth from your depths.
7. What were your plans for this precious Pearl?
8. Did you think of sharing your happiness with others and give them pleasure in your discovery.

What did you learn about yourself?

Advent Day Nine

Parable of the Unlike Sons.

Mt. 21, 28-32

Imagine you are the father in the story.

Answer the following questions and reflect upon your answers.

1. How well did I really know my sons?
2. As their father had you discerned their differences?
3. As I watched them growing up, did I try to correct or admonish them?
4. Did I have expectations of them both? What?
5. Did I expect them to be honest?
6. Were you disturbed by their behavior when you ask them to work in the vineyard?
7. How did you follow through following this incident.
8. How did the incident affect you?

What did you learn about yourself?

Advent Day Ten

Parable of the Unlike Sons.

Mt. 21, 28-32

Imagine you are the first son in this story.

1. Do I believe I should be obedient to my father's request?
2. What is my emotional stance to the request?
3. Perhaps I did not even notice a touch of hypocrisy in my response to him by adding the word "Sir" to my answer. Why?
4. I said yes. It did not follow through. Why?
5. I was conscious of my lack of honesty. Why did this not deter me?
6. Did you ever allow your conscience to take you to task?
7. Did you ever feel remorse and apologize to your father? When? How?

What did you learn about yourself?

Advent Day Eleven

Parable of the Unlike Sons.

Mt. 21, 28-32

Imagine you are the other son in the story.

Answer the following questions and reflect on your answers.

1. Are you aware of your different personality from your brother?
2. How do you ordinarily respond to your father?
3. Were you aware that your father full authority over you?
4. Your response to his request was curt, rude and quite unacceptable. How do you feel about that?
5. How do you think Your father felt about your glibness?
6. What in you caused you to change your mind and go to work in the vineyard?
7. How did your father respond?
8. Were you happy with your change of heart?

What did you learn about yourself?

Advent Day Twelve

The Parable of the Sower.

Mt,13, 49

Imagine You are the Sower in the story.

Answer the following questions and reflect on your answers.

1. As a farmer your workdays are long and tiring. What is your response to that?
2. You set out to scatter the seed by hand. How aware are you of where your seed falls?
3. How deep is your concern for the seeds that fall outside the prepared ground?
4. Do you ever try to retrieve the seed that is not falling in fertile earth?
5. As a farmer, is it not your responsibility to make sure that no seed is wasted? How do you deal with that?

What did you learn about yourself?

Advent Day Thirteen

The Parable of the Sower.

Mt,13, 49

Imagine you are the insensitive seed in the story.

Answer the following questions and reflect on your answers.

1. Why do you hear God's word only externally?
2. It seems your inner openness is stunted to all religious things. What do you say?
3. It seems that the things of the next world are unreal to you. Is that true?
4. As the real thinking person, the things of the life to come doesn't exist. Is this so?
5. Do you believe that Christianity is the crutch for cripples' comment?
6. You say that you can stand on your own two feet alone true?
7. Word of God may be something to others, but not for you. Is this your stance?

What did you learn about yourself?

Advent Day Fourteen

The Parable of the Sower.

Mt,13, 49

Imagine you are the superficial seed in this story.

Answer the following questions and reflect upon your answers.

1. Is it true that all slips by you. flits around you?
2. Is it true that you are open to everything - perhaps do open?
3. Is it true that you are ready to receive but nothing remains fast?
4. Is it true that your credo for today comes from the passing word of the world?
5. No sacrifice can challenge your faith. Comment.
6. Do you consider yourself a "weathervane" person, who is easily superficially swayed by trends or external pressures?
7. You say that you will take things seriously when you are on your deathbed, true or false?

What did you learn about yourself?

Advent Day Fifteen

The Parable of the Sower.

Mt,13, 49

Imagine you are the defeated seed in the story.

Answer the following questions and reflect upon your answers.

1. Do you recognize your long struggle to remain faithful to the faith which you learned as a child?
2. How did you react to the principles and values of this faith?
3. What was it that enticed you to be move away from your faith?
4. Do you believe that being human, you must be a part of the distractions of the world?
5. Have you now realized that the exterior life has more or less taken over the interior life?
6. It seems that you have given in more and more quietly and unnoticed to the wholly worldly life.

What are you willing to change in your life?

What did you learn about yourself?

Advent Day Sixteen

The Parable of the Sower.

Mt,13, 49

Imagine you are 30% believer in this story.

Answer the following questions and reflect on your answers.

1. As a thirty percent believer, do you realize that you are contemplated by the Lord? How do you respond to this knowledge?
2. Do you fully realize that your Christianity is on and off day by day. How do you respond to this?
3. You have had your good days and your bad days, your ups and downs. How does this speak to you?
4. Your faith continues to be a part of your life, but are there places where you have recognize yourselves being lulled into your worldly endeavors?
5. You held onto Christ and had confidence in Him. Is this true?
6. His words were your light and grace despite the struggle. How do you explain this?
7. In the end, you see that the Lord has blessed your struggles, true or false.

What did you learn about yourself?

Advent Day Seventeen

The Parable of the Sower.

Mt,13, 49

Imagine You are the 60% believer in the story.

Answer the following questions and reflect on your answers.

1. The people of 60% belief are also praised by the Lord. How aware are you about this?
2. Shadows, however, flicker in your life. What are some of these shadows?
3. Sometimes you return from these struggles deeply wounded. How do you deal with them?
4. Perhaps you have noticed that your darkness has become brighter. Why is this?
5. You are not a saint yet, but you are getting closer. How do you respond to this?
6. You have frequently cooperated with grace and turned to God for help. Can you explain this?
7. Are you willing to strive even harder? To attain holiness?

What did you learn about yourself?

Advent Day Eighteen

The Parable of the Sower.

Mt,13, 49

Imagine You are the 100% believer in the story.

Answer the following questions and reflect on your answers.

1. In the eyes of God, you are completed and flawless. Humbly, how do you respond?
2. First of all, you seek the Kingdom of God. Is this always in the forefront of your mind?
3. You live according to God's values. How do you manage to do this?
4. God occupies first place in your life. How do you regulate everything else to second or third place?
5. You seek and find God in everyone and everything. How do you manage this?
6. Everything for you becomes a glorification of God. How do you sustain this?
7. You are a person of great faithfulness. Tell us how you manage to obtain the statues in the eyes of God.

What did you learn about yourself?

Advent Day Nineteen

The Parable of the Godless Judge

Luke, 18,1-8.

Imagine you are the Judge in this story.

Answer the following questions and reflect on your answers.

1. You claim you are godless. What does this mean for you?
2. You also claim you have no regard for others. Are you not lonely and isolated?
3. Why are you garrulous – excessively talkative in a thoughtless way?
4. Can you not find any compassion for the poor widow?
5. Why do you refuse to hear her petition for justice? Which is your job?
6. She comes before you regularly. She perseveres in her demand. Do you realize she is disturbing or bothering you?
7. Is it her persistence that causes you to finally hear her case? Why?

What did you learn about yourself?

Advent Day Twenty

The parable of the Godless Judge
Lk. 18, 1-8

Imagine you are the widow in this story

Answer the following questions and reflect on your answers.

1. You are a poor widow. How do you deal with this?
2. You have been unjustly treated, you seek justice. Why go to the Godless judge?
3. How do you react when he rejects your case?
4. You persevere even though she treats you badly. Why?
5. In his haughtiness he scorns you. Why do you persist, nevertheless?
6. Do you see any weakening in his hostile attitude towards you.
7. Finally, you wear him down and he hears your case and grants you justice. How did this feel?

What did you learn about yourself?

Advent Day Twenty-One

The parable of the Pharisee and the Publican.
Luke 18, 23.

Imagine you are the Pharisee in this story.

Answer the following questions and reflect on your answers.

1. You consider yourself righteous. Is this not a form of pride on your part?
2. Are you not too conscious of your religiosity and Holiness? What do you say?
3. Your attitude gives the appearance that you look down on others, true or false.
4. Your prayer is thanks for what you have and are. When do you pray for what you need?
5. You judge and condemn others thinking you are so much better than them. True or false?
6. In your self righteousness you scorn others and look down on them. Is this an observable fault?
7. Do you have no concern for the prayers of humble people?

What did you learn about yourself?

Advent Day Twenty-two

The parable of the Pharisee and the Publican.
Luke 18, 23.

Imagine you are the Publican in this story.

Answer the following questions and reflect on your answers.

1. You see yourself as having a bad conscience. Is this true?
2. You see yourself of having transgressed God's laws and our story, true or false?
3. How did you develop such a lax conscience that you could become a tax collector?
4. Why is it you do not feel at home in the temple and stay at the back to pray?
5. Is your compunction and sorrow real enough that you can go home as one humble one before God.
6. Can you accept the fact that you are totally dependent upon God?
7. Is striking your breast a sign of your submission to God real? Explain.

What did you learn about yourself?

Advent Day Twenty-Three

The parable of the Wedding feast.
Mt.2, 2-14

Imagine you are a member of the first group to be invited to the wedding banquet.

Answer the following questions and reflect upon your answers.

1. You appear to be very disinterested upon receiving the King's invitation. Why?
2. The invitation arrives several times explain your reluctance to answer.
3. The invitation is sent with great urgency. What holds you back?
4. Is it true that you claim to be a realist for whom only the material and the earthly are a reality.
5. Time is money and I must be busy securing my business. Is this your real excuse for rejecting the invitation?
6. Your reject the invitation. This means you remain outside cutoff from the king (Christ). Is this what you want?
7. Do you understand that one who stands outside? Will in the end be rejected?

What did you learn about yourself?

Advent Day Twenty-Four

The parable of the Wedding feast.
Mt.2, 2-14

Imagine you are a member of the second group to be invited to the wedding banquet.

Answer the following questions and reflect upon your answers.

1. You claim to be a person in opposition. What do you mean by this?
2. Are you responsible for killing the bearer of the invitation? Why?

3. Your actions reveal a revolutionary disposition. Is this true?

4. You are considered a militant atheist. Where does that leave you in terms of the Kingdom of God?

5. Are you really a hater of mankind, an enemy of true humanity?

6. Have you anticipated the rapid response of the king?

7. Do you want to continue in the common action and organization of the opposition?

What did you learn about yourself?

Advent Day Twenty-Five

The parable of the Wedding feast. Mt.2, 2-14

Imagine you are a member of the Disrespectful group.

Answer the following questions and reflect on your answers.

1. Why do you choose to be so disrespectful? Explain.
2. The invitation to the banquet seems to mean nothing to you Why?
3. What changed your mind about attending?
4. Why did you refuse a wedding garment and instead entered the banquet room in your rags.
5. This royal invitation does not appear to be special to you. Comment.
6. How is it that you seem to know nothing about the reverent awe, is this true?
7. If your inner transformation does not take place completely, you will be rejected. How does this make you feel?

What did you learn yourself?

Advent Day Twenty-Six

The parable of the Wedding feast.
Mt.2, 2-14

Imagine you are one of the real wedding guests.

Answer the following questions and reflect upon your answer.

1. The invitation to the royal banquet is the greatest surprise of your life. Why?
2. You are your friends: tramps, vagabonds, poor folk, beggars, do nothings from the highways. What did you make of this?
3. You joyfully complied with the invitation. for what reason?
4. With joy, you put on a wedding garment offered to you. Why did this elate you?
5. One thing you fear, having to go back to your station in the world, how will you handle this?
6. It is it true that you are one who faces the sin and weakness of his life, but yearns for grace and goodness?
7. You are one who knows how to listen to an invitation to joy. True or false?

What did you learn about yourself?