

MEET THE SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

FATHER TERRY SAWCHUK THUNDER BAY DIOCESE



Father Terry Sawchuk was born and raised in Thunder Bay, Ontario, the third oldest in a family of ten. After attending St. Peter's Seminary in London, Ontario, he was ordained to the priesthood in 2010.

Following his initial assignment to serve at St. Peter's, Thunder Bay, he was reassigned to the parishes of Holy Angels, Schreiber, and St. Martin of Tours, Terrace Bay. Father Terry currently supports the mission and work of the Catholic Women's League as spiritual advisor in two parish councils as well as the Thunder Bay Diocesan Council.

Dear friends in Christ,

It is a great joy to be able to share this message with you, especially as we enter into this privileged season of Advent grace. One of the things I appreciate more and more about this season is the call to alertness and action that it places on our heart. Advent exhorts us with the words of St Paul: "Brothers and sisters, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from your sleep." (Romans 13:11)

Invariably, this is a piece of scripture that makes me think about my alarm clock. On my alarm clock there are two buttons – snooze and stop. While the snooze button is by far the biggest and easiest to find, the stop button is much smaller and more difficult to locate. I suspect that whoever designed the clock must have known a lot about human psychology and which button would be most utilized!



It has been said that a majority of people will hit the snooze button at least once before getting out of bed. I'm willing to admit that I've done it myself! As innocuous as it may appear to be, there is something about the snooze button that can be hauntingly revealing about one's overall disposition to the day and even to life. When the alarm clock first rings, I am faced with a choice – to engage or disengage. To get up promptly is to choose engagement. To hit the snooze button is to choose disengagement. Which will it be?

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St. Josemaria Escriva spoke of this in terms of living what he called the “heroic minute.” Living the heroic minute means that when the alarm clock sounds, immediately and without hesitation, we spring out of bed and offer a prayer of thanksgiving to God. The idea here is that if we conquer the moment, we have conquered the day. No matter what happens, we have already given it over to God. We are primed for engagement, openness and action.

Hitting the snooze button on life, responsibility, dreams and even the things of the Spirit, is a reality many of us can relate to. With all this in mind, the spiritual wake-up call of Advent becomes ever more relevant: “You know what time it is, now is the moment to wake from your sleep.”

Personally, and collectively, let’s take to heart the opportunity Advent places before us to decidedly and prayerfully engage, be open and act.

