Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time
November 8, 2026

Ever since I can remember, I've had dreams of needing to prepare for some sort of looming disaster. The details are always different, but the fear-fueled and fervent preparation remains the same.

These days, against the current political backdrop, conversations at times hedge on an anxious need for preparedness even with friends who don't share this particular psychological proclivity of mine. With other friends—particularly other mothers of young children—we openly discuss what kinds of food stores to keep stashed away in our basements, go-bag supplies, and how to reach our children in the event of an emergency.

These days, with climate change accelerating, war in the news, and precious few real adults in the room on the global scale, preparedness is a salient theme as many of us try to find things we can control in a world that is spinning further and further out of control.

It is through this lens that I am tempted to interpret today's readings. I, too, am preoccupied with having enough fuel on hand to keep the lights on. But this is not the kind of preparedness that these readings call for.

The bridal attendants are duty-bound to keep their lamps burning, yes, but not against looming disaster—instead, to usher in a joyous celebration. The lamps are to light the way to a wedding banquet with the Beloved. The image of these lamps shining in the darkness reminds me of John 1:5: "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."

Seen in this light (pun intended), these readings beckon us to something much deeper than individual preparedness. They call us to the joyful work of keeping God's light burning in these dark times and to remembering always the One whom our soul loves.

Loren Gaillardetz