



May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to think in harmony with one another, in keeping with Christ Jesus.

ROMANS 15:5

## Pretend the Dream

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

**W**hen I was in college, we had a professor who would often say that if, instead of acting the way we feel, we would act the way we would like to feel, then we would soon begin to feel the way we hoped. Over the years, I've found a fair amount of wisdom in that advice, although I don't always remember to tap into it. I know it's all a kind of pretending, but somehow the pretending does seem to make a difference.

Each year, we make our journey into Christmas with a year's baggage. We come with good memories of moments of lazy fun, sun-drenched summers, and dappled autumns, vacations, and birthday parties. But we also make our way into this red and green season with a generous share of hurts and pains, failures and even sins, just because most years are lived that way.

And so, during this last month of each year we play at being happy and pretend that all is good. We sing carols

and toast friendships and wish each other blessings and goodness. And we do it all with an unspoken honesty, knowing full well that life is not always so, but maybe by pretending, and by some freakish twist of godliness, we can find for some short time the harmony once prophesied by Isaiah. Maybe the wolf and the lamb will be kind, and the calf and lion will forget their history, and for at least one brief shining moment we will live in harmony with one another. ●

### Reflect

***This Advent, once a week, try to skip doing something that stresses you.***

***Once a week, act the way you would like to feel. Fake it if you must.***