

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church

Second Sunday of Advent

December 6, 2009

Fr. Bob

Readings

Baruch 5:1-9

Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11

Luke 3:1-6

In today's Gospel, John the Baptist encourages his followers to be patient, as the wait for salvation will soon be over. The Israelites longed to see the day when the Messiah would come. Each generation hoped and prayed that they would be the one to witness the appearance of God's anointed. The Jewish people still hope and pray for this event in every generation. But Jesus did not come as many expected. Some thought he would arrive in a dramatic event and the end of the world would occur. Others expected a regal entrance or a political overthrow of the Romans. Luke's Gospel repeatedly points out that the very people who longed for the day to see the Messiah missed out because they were looking for the wrong signs.

John the Baptist is the first to see Jesus for who he really is for the world. And he is telling people that Jesus will be the ultimate for us. He recognizes that Jesus' sacrificial love can fill our valleys, lay mountains low, make crooked paths straight and rough ways smooth.

Advent is not a season where we have to pretend that we do not know Jesus is coming and then put on mock surprise at Christmas. Advent is the season which celebrates a "patient yes" to the coming of the kingdom. Every year all of us in the Church stand and remind ourselves of how blessed we are to have seen our salvation in Jesus. We remember the faith of those who longed to see what we see and to know what we know. And we cultivate our patience for life's valleys, mountains and crooked paths where sometimes we can feel Jesus' absence more than his presence, where only when we look back we can see he was with us all the way. And our memories should be a another sign of hope for us as we remember his promise fulfilled, and know that in our lives we can use that hope to know that all will be fulfilled.

So, as we all wait together this Advent let's say yes to all that salvation holds for us: yes to God's personal love; yes to Jesus' kingdom of justice and peace; yes to every opportunity to serve the Gospel and yes to knowing that our God is a companion to us at every step of our journey, even in the most unexpected ways, and yes, to the coming of the kingdom once and for all in it's fullness.

Scottish poet John Bell expresses our Advent hope in this way:

"Light looked down and saw the darkness.

'I will go there', said light.

Peace looked down and saw war.

'I will go there', said peace.

Love looked down and saw hatred.

'I will go there', said love.

So he,

the Lord of Light,

the Prince of Peace,

the King of Love,

came down and crept in beside us."

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