

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

12/10/2023.

Readings: Isaiah 40:1- 5, 9-11; 2Peter 3:8-14; Mark 1:1-8.

In our own days there are enough things going on to depress us if we dwell on them all. It might be world events, it might be the social and moral climate we live in, and it might be personal worries. Sometimes we need help to see beyond our present woes, someone who can give us hope, someone who is a prophet who can tell us spring will soon be here and the trees will be in full bloom again.

This is what our readings are telling us. This is what Jesus' birth is telling us. This is what his presence with us today in the Eucharist is telling us. But today's readings are telling us one more thing. They are telling us we can't just sit back and wait for all to happen. We have to prepare. Quoting Isaiah, the Baptist cries out to prepare the way of the Lord.

*So, when I say prepare, I want you to look into your lives more deeply than thinking of parties or gifts or cards. Those are nice, but there's more to it. It is an invitation **to each of us** to "make straight his paths." And that should tell us something about the spiritual life and this season in particular. God always does his part, not once or once in a while, but **always**. We are the ones who must also do our part, opening ourselves up to the transforming love of the one who is Love.*

In our second reading, St. Peter tells us the "day of the Lord will come like a thief." Peter gives us an idea of what we should be doing to prepare. Pray that our love for God and for each other may increase, that we keep a sense of what is important in life and that we live pure and blameless lives filled with good works.

*And so, while in a certain sense **Advent** is about hopeful waiting for our God, it's also about **God waiting for us**, being patient with us as he waits for us to open wide the doors to our hearts, to rid ourselves of whatever **stands in the way of our God "getting" to us**, to level every mountain and fill every valley.*

What's getting in the way of God getting to you? As I continue journeying and preparing this Advent, I hope to begin to discover the answer for myself. May each of you strive to do the same.