

Second Sunday of Advent-C

Lk 3:1-6

Dear Friends,

The Christian perception of time is clearly measured by God's involvement. The readings of today's liturgy, like most scriptures, recognize the saving presence of God in our history. They invite us to encounter and respond to God's presence in our time. We call it Salvation History.

An important part of our Advent celebration calls us to the awareness of the coming of Jesus. The first part of this season puts the emphasis on the second coming of the Lord. Only after the sixteenth of December do we direct our attention to the Incarnation. This initial focus on the second coming also helps us to see the emergence of God in our daily experience.

The ancients, and more than a few moderns, have perceived time and their lives as part of a repeating cycle of life and death that just continues a relentless pattern of repetition. All is trapped in a closed sense of fate that leaves little room for escape. This leads to a deep sense of abandonment, a ruthless sense of the inevitable.

Today's Gospel heralds the Good News of Jesus coming at a specific time as Luke delineates the political and religious leaders of the known world in that day. He opens to us a new day and invites us into the saving reality of God's love as the true destiny of time. The shackles of hopelessness and blind fate are shattered with the coming of John's announcement. By these words of the Baptist, all that was, all that is and all that is to come are engulfed in a reality that is pregnant with a gracious, irrevocable sense of hope. God has spoken and love will prevail.

On this Second Sunday of Advent, we are invited to meet this hope-drenched reality in the words of Baruch (5:19), Paul (Phil1:4-6, 8-11) and Luke. We are encouraged to look upon the brokenness and burdens of our life and world with eyes of hope and a longing heart seeking God's presence that continually bursts through the darkness to reveal the light.

Our Advent prayer, **Come, Lord Jesus!**, captures the reality of our life and world. We need salvation. **"All flesh will see the salvation of our God."** (Lk 6:6) The One we await offers us the glorious possibility of goodness, justice, peace and truth. To prepare for this advent of the Lord we need to open our hearts to change. We must overcome the valleys of our selfishness, the mountains of our prejudice and the neglect and judgement of others especially the poor. We can, indeed, straighten the crooked ways by a life in the footsteps of Jesus. The loving response to our daily responsibilities and relationships will open our hearts. It will lead the way to be ready for the coming of Jesus with a joyful hope and longing.
Come, Lord Jesus!