

**Make straight in the wasteland
a highway for our God!**

*Second Sunday of
Advent*



San Ignacio de Loyola Parish

December 6, 2015

REFLECTION ON THE WORD

Today's first reading from Baruch (5:1-9) practically shouts with joy: "Up, Jerusalem! Stand upon the heights!" With the people of Jerusalem, we too await the end of our exile and long for the joyous day when "all flesh shall see the salvation of God" (Gospel).



In the meantime, however, we are left with Isaiah's **Advent** challenge to "prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his path". How do we do that? By repenting! Isaiah and John both describe repentance as a leveling and a straightening out of the uneven and crooked shape of our lives. They call us to ask

whether our path is taking us closer to God as well as opening up for others the way to God. Then, indeed, "all flesh shall see the salvation of God". This is our **Advent** mission and we are doing it together, in community, in San Ignacio.

Words to reflect upon: Isaiah's Advent challenge

Let us pray to the God of Peace for
a new spirit of universal love and
creative nonviolence that the days of vengeance,
assassination, drone attacks,
nuclear terrorism and war will soon end
and a new day of Peace will dawn
because of our efforts.
We can be signs of hope!

**This week we HOPE!
We want to see!**

Praying With ISAIAH During Advent


The words from the great Isaiah are our guide during Advent. His words are meant to console us and offer us hope. These quotations are taken from the readings of the second Sunday of **Advent**. The links are to the full reading for that day.

"...then the wolf shall be a guest of the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; the calf and the young lion shall browse together, with a little child to guide them. The cow and the bear shall be neighbors, together their young shall



rest; the lion shall eat hay like the ox. The baby shall play by the cobra's den, and the child lay his hand on the adder's lair. There shall be no harm or ruin on all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be filled with knowledge of the LORD, as water covers the sea."

Isaiah 11

The **Christmas Eve liturgy** is one of the most beautiful celebrations in San Ignacio Parish, and our 9:30 Community is responsible for making it happen! We urge you to help organize this liturgy in whatever way possible: from joining the choir to handing out candles - all these things are *Very Important* to bringing about a beautiful, meaningful Christmas experience. Please speak to Laura or to Kathy Bello if you want to help. **Also** please visit the Parish Website - www.sanignaciopr.org - for all information related to our Parish. 

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people,
1 Timothy 2:1

LET US PRAY TOGETHER TODAY for the chronically ill: Sylvia Tasner, Jerry Vega, Fr. Vega, **Maggie Maziarz**, Rudy & Sonia Méndez. *Let us continue to pray together as a community for the growth of peace, especially in the Middle East, Syria, Iraq and Turkey through the collaboration of all people of good will to end violence and promote justice and peace.*

PRAYER
Requests

Advent Waiting

Ordinarily we do not like to be delayed. Think of traffic jams, lines at the grocery store, etc. We project our minds forward to the many things we have on our list besides wasting time. Is there anything we can open to when highway traffic is creeping along at six miles per hour?

Yes, if we come to our senses. Did you ever really feel the texture of the steering wheel you grasp every day? Thank God for the gift of touch. How about letting in the colors of the trees? Thank God for the gift of nature's beauty all around us. The people in other cars—visible to you at six miles per hour? Pray for them. If you stay in the present instead of mainly the future or the past, you will find subtle and obvious beauty all about you. Your goal will arrive when its time comes. Meanwhile, the present tense is still happening.

Advent is like this. A time to realize that emptiness is a healthy and normal part of our lives. We are continually refilled if we let ourselves be. Strange to say, waiting for fulfillment is also itself a fulfillment. It lets us be what we are—not God but human.

May the real world be born to you as you wait.

The Holy Year of Mercy

Symbolically calling on the entire global Roman Catholic Church to take up his papacy's central message of compassion and pardon, **Pope Francis will officially open the new jubilee year, the Holy Year of Mercy this Tuesday, December 8th.** The Pope intends the Holy Year as a way for the church to "make more evident its mission to be a witness of mercy". Noting that December 8th is the 50th anniversary of the closing of the



Second Vatican Council, Pope Francis has remarked that

"The Church feels a great need to keep this event alive".

May Lady Wisdom, Holy Spirit, be with us on our journey to be witnesses of mercy!

Praying With Scripture



Gospel Luke 3:1-6

What does it mean to "see the salvation of God" that Isaiah foretold? John quite clearly tells us: seek "repentance for the forgiveness of sins." We are to actively level out the mountains

and valleys of our own lives. We are to "make straight" our relationship with God and others. We are to hear the "word of God" and act on it. Do we? How well?

BECOMING AN ADVENT PEOPLE

Fr. Vega told us some time ago about the "powerful, reflective, grace-filled season of **Advent**" with its sense of heightened expectation, a feeling that something wonderful, something godly gathering force, a season, that as it goes on, would teach us what it means to be a people of hope. He was right. Today on this Second Sunday of **Advent** we wait and we hope for something new and powerful about to begin. **We can be signs of hope!**

Daniel Berrigan also says this very powerfully in his short essay titled simply:

Advent

It is not true that creation and the human family are doomed to destruction and loss.

This is true:

For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him, shall not perish but have everlasting life.

It is not true that we must accept inhumanity and discrimination, hunger and poverty, death and destruction.

This is true:

I have come that they may have life, and that abundantly.

It is not true that violence and hatred should have the last word, and that war and destruction rule forever.

This is true:

For unto us a child is born, and unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, the Everlasting, the Prince of Peace.

It is not true that we are simply victims of the powers of evil who seek to rule the world.

This is true:

To me is given authority in heaven and on earth, and lo, I am with you, even unto the end of the world.

It is not true that we have to wait for those who are specially gifted, who are the prophets of the Church, before we can be peacemakers.

This is true:

I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your young shall see visions and your old shall have dreams.

It is not true that our hopes for the liberation of humanity, for justice, human dignity, and peace are not meant for this earth and for this history.

This is true:

The hour comes, and it is now, that true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth.

So let us enter **Advent** in hope, even hope against hope. Let us see visions of love and peace and justice. Let us affirm with humility, with joy, with faith, with courage: Jesus Christ—the Life of the world.