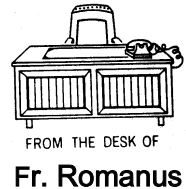


2nd Sunday of Advent

December 10, 2017



Sunday Reflection:

As we enter the Second Sunday of Advent, we hear that familiar resolute voice calling for repentance. Today's gospel introduces a quote from Isaiah fulfilled in John the Baptist as the voice calling out in the desert to prepare the way of the Lord. We hear so many voices every day competing for our attention. I have this image of stock traders on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange shouting their orders all at once. I have wondered how anyone could possibly understand anything in the midst of so much chaos.

Likewise, in the midst of the many competing voices in our lives this Advent, it could be difficult to hear the voice of John the Baptist calling us to prepare the way of the Lord. Those fortunate enough to hear his voice might wonder what it means.

Preparing the way of the Lord is an invitation to renounce sin and avoid the occasions of sin. It is an invitation to address those behaviors that are incompatible with our Christian identity. It is an invitation to intensify our prayer life and find time to be with God, especially during this Advent season. It is an invitation to reach out to people in need, namely: the sick, the hungry, the naked, etc. We prepare the way of the lord when we learn to love one another unconditionally, promote peace and justice, learn the ways of forgiveness and reconciliation, and advocate for the less fortunate.

John the Baptist has a lot to teach us about humility. He had no problem declaring that one mightier than him was coming. He went as far as stating that he was unworthy to stoop and loosen the thongs of his sandals. He made it clear that he was baptizing with water while the Messiah would baptize with the Holy Spirit. John had no illusions about his role as the messenger, not the Messiah. His message was obviously compelling and as people flooded to him, he pointed them to Jesus. As we journey through Advent, we pray for humility and a spirit of true conversion. Hence, like John we should point to Jesus, the incarnate Son of God, who comes to restore the world.