

Homily. 2nd Sunday in Advent. Year.C. 4/5 December 2021.

The question for us always, but especially in Advent, is where have we encountered Jesus over the course of this past week? When and where have we heard Our Lord speaking to us? When was it that we saw Christ and experienced His coming to meet and greet us, blessing our days with His grace?

Have we heard Him in the quiet of our prayer, in the Sacred Scriptures, in the voices of other people? Have we felt Him on those mountain top moments of joy, contentment, peace and rest? Have we experienced His love and care in the Sacraments of our Church and here within the kindness and listening attention of our Parish family? Has Christ come to meet us in the valleys, too, in the shadows and deep, dark foreboding feelings that can be so much part of our lives? Has He graced us on the ordinary days and those rarer times of both stress and of calm?

Of course, we'd all like the mountains in our lives flattened out and the valleys filled in making a smoother path, but this just isn't yet the case. As we heard in the Gospel John the Baptist wanted this straight and level highway for the people of God so that they would be prepared to welcome the coming of the Lord. Yet, God's word came to him in the barren desert wilderness of Judaea, not in a land of running streams and easy pastures. Even so, John heard God, accepting his call to do his all, preaching God's message of repentance and readiness for the arrival the Anointed One.

St. Paul too, wanted everything to go smoothly for the Church at Philippi, asking that the One who had begun the good work in them would see it

finished when the day of Christ came. Only then, Paul added, would the ongoing work of perfect goodness and love which Jesus Christ produces in us be achieved to the greater glory of God. Paul knew that this work of flattening, filling and straightening was the work of a lifetime, never ending until we become like God, seeing God as God really is.

It's into this very rough and uneven world, then, that God comes to us. It's in the many ups and downs, the numerous twists and turns of our everyday lives that Christ is to be found Advent-ing in us, these modern days of ours still filled with various Caesars, Pontius Pilates and Herods bubbling over with their plans and schemes, their greed, lies and lusts for recognition and power. This is where we have to hear the voice of God and experience His listening Spirit guiding us onwards.

But, the Lord is only able to do great things for us and fill us with joy if our minds are open and our hearts are ready to welcome Him in. So pray here and over this week that nothing may come to hinder us as we set out to meet God's Son and that by growing in the wisdom of heaven we may be admitted to His company.