

Homily. 3rd Sunday in Advent. Year. C. 11/12 December 2021.

The old law of supply and demand tells us that things become over priced, even priceless, when they're much desired but hard to come by. This applies to everything from herrings to the hottest fad and even to the houses that we want to make into our homes. On the personal level of the quality of our lives, it also applies to those great intangibles such as faith, hope and love, gifts which give us meaning, contentment and peace.

It's by our faith in the One greater and wiser than us that we have hope. This hope frees and fills with love for each other because we know by our faith that our future is secure in God. The fruit of our loving is joy, real joy in living and serving others and God who has made God's home in us.

John desired to get the people ready to welcome the long awaited Christ. When they asked 'what must we do?', he challenged them to put aside their ways of greed, lying, cheating and intimidation. In short, John asked for a complete turn around in their thinking and values, a turn-away from selfishness and a turn-towards God and others, seen as sisters and brothers in the one people of God.

Baptism in the waters of the Jordan River was the way that John marked and celebrated this about-turn. He wasn't the Christ they awaited, stating clearly that he was only the forerunner of the coming One who would give us re-birth in the fire and power of the Holy Spirit. We are the children of this promise now fulfilled. We are the ones who have been reborn in both water and the Spirit of God. This was marked and celebrated in our Baptism and Confirmation. What's more, our re-birth into the new

covenant of Christ and His self-giving love gets refreshed and deepened right here, whenever we come together to celebrate and received the Eucharist, forming God's people and new family which we call the Church. This is the source of our hope, an enduring hope which offers us the kind of joy that's for living every day, always and everywhere.

Using the prophetic words of Zephaniah; by our faith in Christ we have God living not just in our midst, but living right inside of us, renewing us daily in the love of the Lord. We have no more reason then to fear for God is on our side, meaning that ultimately nothing and no one can ever triumph over us. St. Paul understood this greatest of all gifts which is why he repeated that all he wanted was our happiness in the Lord always. It's this inner knowledge and security in Gods closeness that offers to us that much in demand quality of hope, the hope that lets us rejoice.

Back now to the question that the people asked John; What must we do? Our answer is found in knowing and living as we really are; God's children and family, the brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ who was born as one of us, died for all of us and is now re-born forever as our Lord of Life. In His Spirit Jesus Christ's life and story is our story, our life today and our destiny forever. This destiny already begun in us, happening and growing within us even now. What we must do then is lovingly, fearlessly and joyfully share in our words and by our deeds the much in demand hope that we have. Then, free of cost, many can come to find the happiness and joy in living, creating and serving that they are so deeply seeking and desiring.