

## *Advent 1B 2014*

### *Waiting in Hope*

All of us spend a lot of time waiting. Sometimes our waiting is annoying: We wait in lines, we wait in traffic; we wait because other people are late. But other times our waiting is filled with hope and expectation: A newly married couple waits for the birth of its first child; a high school student waits for a college letter of acceptance; a family waits for the return of its son or daughter from military service.

The season of Advent is the second kind of waiting: we are waiting in hope and expectation for the coming of Christ in Christmas mystery. We are waiting in hope and expectation for the coming of Christ at the end of the ages. We are waiting in hope and expectation for a new coming of Christ into our lives—a coming that will change and transform us, a coming that will renew and sustain us.

*The Prophet Isaiah understood this kind of waiting* when he said of God, “Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down with the mountains quaking before you you.” Living at a time when God had withdrawn from his people because the people had withdrawn from God, the Prophet was waiting for a new manifestation of God’s salvation. *St. Paul understood this kind of waiting* when he encouraged the Corinthians to wait in hope for the Lord’s return. Jesus understood

this kind of waiting, when he told his disciples to be vigilant and watchful, for God' salvation will come when they least expect it.

*But do we understand this kind of waiting?* Are we waiting and hoping for something that will change and transform our lives? Or are we simply waiting in line, waiting in traffic, impatient and annoyed because we are waiting? The season of Advent reminds us that waiting can be joyful and hopeful if we are waiting for what is important—if we are waiting for the coming of Christ into our lives.

The Prophet lived in hope and his life was transformed, even though most of the people of his day had been unfaithful to God. St. Paul lived in hope and his life was transformed even though the world about him no longer believed. What are we waiting for? What are we hoping for? There is one thing, and only one thing, that can change and transform our lives. There is one thing and only one thing to wait and hope for. There is one thing and only one thing that will change and renew us—the appearance of God in our lives. For when God becomes present to us, our lives are changed and transformed. When God turns his face to us, we turn our face to God and to each other. When God speaks, our lives are filled will with God's grace.

Seize the moment. Redeem the time. Do not squander this Advent Season—this time of waiting and hoping. Let Christ come into your life to change and transform your life.

