

Advent 2A 2013

Preparing a Way for the Lord

During the season of Advent we are waiting and hoping for great things.

With Isaiah we are waiting for that day when the earth will be filled with the knowledge of God. In the words of today's responsorial psalm, we are waiting for that time when justice will flourish, and there will be the fullness of peace forever.

With St. Paul we are waiting for that day when all the nations of the world will glorify God for his mercy. During this Advent season we are waiting and hoping for the One, the only One, who can change and transform our lives forever. We are waiting for the coming of God in our lives and in the life of the world.

Our waiting, however, is not the kind of waiting we experience every day when we impatiently stand in line. We are not just waiting for something to happen. We are, and we must prepare for what we are waiting. This is why John the Baptist cries out in today's gospel, repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. This is why John calls us to prepare the way of the Lord so that the Lord can enter into our lives and the life of the world. This is why John calls us to make the crooked paths straight so that we can experience the Lord's salvation. This is why John calls us to produce the fruit of good deeds so that we will be prepared for the Day of the Lord.

Our waiting, this Advent Season, is an active waiting in which the Lord calls us to prepare a way for his coming into the world and into our lives in Christmas Mystery. Such waiting is not a waste of time. Such waiting is not boring and useless. Such waiting changes us and the world in which we live.

Notice what John the Baptist says: Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand. To repent is to change our way of thinking, to change our way of looking at the world in which we live. To repent requires us to imagine ourselves and the world in which we live in an entirely new way, a way that only God can make possible.

To repent requires us to think in a new way about God, ourselves, and the world in which we live. To repent is to think in a new way that allows God to be God in our lives, even if it means changing our lives. To think in a new way about ourselves, is to think about ourselves in light of the gospel we confess every week. To think in a new way about the world is to imagine the world as Isaiah did: a world of peace and justice, a world filled with knowledge and mercy of God. To repent means to set aside those old ways of thinking about God, ourselves, and the world that prevents us from seeing God's presence in our lives.

To prepare the way of the Lord is to prepare a space for Christ in our lives and in the world in which we live. To prepare the way of the Lord is to straighten what is crooked and broken in our lives so that Christ may enter into our lives. To

prepare a way for the Lord is to be involved in changing the world so that it will be ready for the appearance of Christ.

Advent is a time of actively waiting and hoping for the coming of God in Christ. It is not the kind of waiting the world hates and abhors; it is an active and joyful waiting that changes and transforms our lives once and for all.

As we celebrate the Eucharist on this Second Sunday of Advent, let us ask for the grace to change and reform our lives so that we will be prepared for the Lord when he appears.