

December 4, 2016
2nd Sunday of Advent — Cycle A

1st Reading: Isaiah 11: 1 – 10.

God restores us through God's word (made flesh).

Psalm 72:1 – 2, 7 – 8, 12 – 13, 17.

Justice will flourish in God's time.

2nd Reading: Romans 15:4 – 9.

Paul prays for hope and harmony.

Gospel: Matthew 3:1 – 12.

God uses John the Baptist (the voice) to preach repentance.

“Wait for it”

God is good, **all the time**. All the time, **God is good**.

My how time is flying by me, this is the 2nd week of Advent already and we still have not touched a flame to the candles on our wreath at home. I guess that is good ecologically because we can use them again next year; but it makes for poor ritual. We did celebrate my aunt's transition to the eternal life with an abundant celebration of joy which was quite appropriate for the advent season. Sr. Pam gave me strict orders to keep this short because of the RCIA Rites of Acceptance and Welcome that will be celebrated during the 11:30 liturgy today, so you are all the beneficiaries of that command.

Matthew uses a farming image in our gospel today and that is wonderful because for anyone who has planted anything you know the hardest part of the experience is waiting for the harvest. The type of waiting we are doing during advent is the same kind both on our part and on God's part. It is not a passive waiting but an active one! We are not called to sit around and do nothing. We are all called to prepare our hearts so that God can come in. So that we can give birth to Jesus in our world by becoming God's voice as John the Baptist modeled. God wants to come into our hearts and world to bring about the peace, the harmony, the joy that Isaiah prophesied in our first reading and Paul prayed for in our second. So we must do all we can to get that place in our heart ready so we can give birth to “God with us”.

What exactly is that? That is the question for each of us. How do we shine the Light of God into our world?

There is an appropriate story for this about St. Nicholas, not the famous 3 bags of gold, although that would be appropriate as well; but this one goes like this: St. Nicholas was the bishop and he observed that his people were suffering extremely. They had no food, nothing to eat. He also observed the ships in the harbor loading up with grain, lots of it. So he went to the captain and asked if he could give some of the grain to him so he could feed his people. The captain explained to the Bishop that this was not possible because the grain was not his to give and that his cargo was weighed at both ends of the voyage. Well, Nicholas said, if I could guarantee that the weight of the grain would remain the same for you would you allow me to feed my people? Nicholas had great faith in God's ability to do anything. So the captain gave him enough grain to make bread for his people. And the weight of the cargo stayed the same. When St. Nicholas finished making the bread and distributing so all would be feed he had a little flour left over and so he went about making cookies in the image of a bishop so the children could each have one and thank God for the great abundance.

Will our faith in God allow us to make room for him in our hearts so that we indeed can give birth to the Christ in our world this Christmas?

God is good, **all the time**. All the time, **God is good**.

