

## The Voice

Second Sunday of Advent – December 4, 2016 – Matthew 3:1-12

Deep in the recesses of our existence lies this little voice that says to each of us...I know better than anyone else. I know the truth and I know what is best. It's the same voice that Adam and Eve followed in the Garden of Eden. It is this little, self-centered voice that requires a willingness to change and to follow the voice of God if we wish to experience the truth of God's justice and peace.

The prophet Isaiah says, **“On that day, a shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse, and from his roots a bud shall blossom. The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: a spirit of wisdom and of understanding, a spirit of counsel and of strength, a spirit of knowledge and of fear of the Lord, and his delight shall be the fear of the Lord.”** The attributes of this coming king sound vaguely familiar. Are they not the gifts of the spirit that we receive in confirmation? Are these not the attributes that every Christian is called to exemplify?

And yet, for me there are days when my voice overtakes the voice of God. I get back into bad habits or I get lazy in my prayer life. I find fault with those I love. I don't exemplify much of anything that is holy.

So Mother Church has, for us, this profound penitential time of year called Advent. These four weeks prior to Christmas allows a time for each of us to consider how we might be willing to change our lives and make a very definitive turn toward God. Advent prepares us to shut down that voice inside of us so that we might prepare our lives for the coming of the Christ Child in our hearts this Christmas, as well as prepare for the Second Coming of Christ at the end of time. We are called to prepare a world where God's voice of justice and mercy prevails.

St. Paul comments on the right relationship that is needed: **“May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to think in harmony with one another, in keeping with Christ Jesus, that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”** The voice we are to prepare during Advent is the communal voice of praise that we most specifically celebrate at Mass each week.

Throughout history God has sent many different voices to call us back. **“John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the dessert of Judea and saying, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ It was of him that the prophet Isaiah had spoken when he said: *A voice of one crying out in the desert, Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.*”**

Which voice will I listen to this Advent? It is a choice. It is not always an easy one to follow as the voice of God can get drowned out by the other voices of the world. Advent allows us time to return to the voice that gives us life eternal.

Happy Advent!

  
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