

Dear parish family,
Blessings of peace and joy to you.

Welcome to the second week of advent. A man appeared before a judge for failing to keep the child support responsibility for his two-year-old boy. And when the judge asked him why he had failed to support the child, he answered, "The boy doesn't look like me." Then the judge responded, "If so, take care of him till he looks like you."

The message of Jon the Baptist for the weekend can be likened to the one above. When he started his ministry, John was heard in the desert shouting, "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths." The central idea underlying John's preaching is repentance and conversion. John calls people to make changes in their lives in anticipation of the advent of the Messiah. Like the judge in the story above, John is asking us to do what makes us look like God.

During this advent, John's voice comes to us again to challenge us to be and look like God. Here are some simple actionable activities we can engage to mirror our Father in heaven:

- Pray more. Try to remind yourself to make brief prayers a few times over the course of the day. We are all busy, especially if we are not retired; and that is alright! With the busy schedule, we mostly don't get the time and the place to kneel and pray. So, it may help a great deal to remind yourself to say brief prayers frequently during the day when driving, sitting in the office, waiting to pick your child from school, picking stuff at the store, etc. If our students can remember to do the same when in the car to and from school, during sports and other activities. If we remind ourselves to pray and do so frequently, we keep our image of God with us.
- Find a favorite short prayer that you can repeat several times during the day. Any simple prayer like one of these: "God is good all the time" "Jesus I trust in You", "My Lord and my God", "Lord help me", "Lord come to my assistance", "Lord make haste to help", "My soul glorifies the Lord", "Blessed be the Lord", can constitute a remarkable prayer, if we consciously repeat them often.
- Show favor to others. The people, we must love, appreciate, and care about, present us with the opportunity for our generosity. So, let's put others before ourselves. People reflect what we are or can be. Love others, appreciate and care for them, and behold, you're loving, appreciating, and caring about yourself. But, if we dislike and condemn them, make no mistake, we dislike and condemn ourselves.
- Look for the opportunity to confess your sins. Confession results in reconciliation with God, with others, and with ourselves. A good confession cleanses the tainted heart and soul to become godly. If we don't look like God now, then let's follow these simple steps and we will soon look like our father in heaven.

Happy advent!

