

Letter From The Rector

Advent Reflections

The season of Advent begins the new liturgical year. It is significant that we begin a new series of lessons and hymns with Advent. It is not without purpose. In so doing, we are reminded that what we do as a Christian community all begins with Christ. Quite simply, without Christ, we would not be known as Christians. Perhaps we would have some other distinctive name, but it would not be the name by which we are now known. Even this name did not emerge as a way to identify and honor those who followed Christ. It began as a pejorative expression in the city of Antioch. This pejorative expression was embraced and sanctified by those it was intended to harm.

The rising of the Advent Season reminds us that all we do should begin with Jesus. This statement encourages us to maintain our focus as we approach the celebration of our Lord's birth. The master teachers have for centuries shown us how we can benefit spiritually from periods of silence and times of reflection. I submit to you that Advent is an appropriate season to discover the value of silence for the spiritual journey. In these moments of silence, we close the door to the noise of our common lives and we allow God's voice to penetrate those places previously impervious to divine speech. The busyness of modern life blurs our vision and reduces our capacity to listen to the voice of heaven. It is unfortunate that most of our living reveals that we have been seduced by the forces of our technological society. We often find ourselves at odds with the value system of the Bible. This is why silence is so important. In places of silence, we hear God's voice in ways that we have not before, and are brought into deeper places of communion and awareness.

During Advent, I encourage you to take time apart from the rush of life to reflect on your Christian experience. If you probe your experience honestly, you will ask yourself divinely inspired questions. If the answers you hear disturb you, be encouraged. It means the Kingdom of God is near you. If the answers you hear comfort you, be comforted. God is seeking to affirm you in your struggle to be like Christ. If you hear no answers at all, do not be discouraged. God is teaching you to pray, to listen, and to wait.

The blessings of Advent await you in the stillness and silence of your journey, a journey sanctified by your earnest desire to hear divine speech and follow a divine path.

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