

Homily 4th Sunday Advent Year C 2021

Facing the Omicron variant, we are threatened with being isolated from our loved ones again. This makes us want to be with them all the more. It deepens the significance of making our faith journey with others and realising how important our families are in this. We belong to several families: those related to us, our parish, our friends and acquaintances, the local community and, of course, the family of the Church. All our personal choices have been influenced and shaped by others in some way, including the negative ones. The first thing Jesus did when starting his ministry was form a group of friends, the apostles. He never worked alone except at the end of his life on earth, but he did not die for himself he died for his friends, for us.

Jesus' birth this Christmas cannot come too early, it almost hurts having to wait. Jesus does not come alone, he comes with the blessing of the Father who sent him, he comes with the power of the Holy Spirit who made it possible in Mary. Jesus speaks and acts in the name of all three. Our unselfish choices are graced and empowered by the Trinity so that the graces we have received are passed on to others. We seek a renewal of these graces as we prepare to celebrate Jesus' birthday together so that we can share them with our families.

"God wants us to feel, ever more deeply, the rich beauty, the deep colour and energy of life that speaks of the Hope, Peace, Joy and Love that we experience in the presence of all new born babies. Only, this Baby, this child, who is to be born in a manger, Jesus Christ, not only reaches out to us with open arms but speaks of renewal, of a lasting promise not just for us but for the whole world.

We can hope again, believe in the impossible, and revive the lost dreams that were sewn into our hearts by a loving God. We can believe again that justice will reign, that reconciliation is possible, and that war will die out because of lack of support."

We are called to be instruments of this new hope by seeking reconciliation with God and with each other, so that we, in our turn, can be instruments of reconciliation, compassion and mercy for which a world filled with pain cries out.

Jesus has taught us so much and is the inspiration behind the giving, the reconciling, the good will, the joy and happiness of this season. He even motivates people without faith for...

*Every time a hand reaches out
to help another.... that is Christmas
Every time someone puts anger aside
and strives for understanding,
that is Christmas
Every time people forget their differences
and realize their love for each other,
that is Christmas
May this Christmas bring us
closer to the spirit of human understanding,
closer to the blessing of peace!*

A chap said to his wife who would be 32 in a couple of days not to get her hopes up.

"After all," he said, "The celebrations are only going to last for half a minute."

*"What are you talking about?" she said. He replied, "Well, it's your **thirty second** birthday."*