

Homily 2nd Sunday Advent Year A 2022

John the Baptist calls us to order in no uncertain terms. So, stop for a moment - reflect on where you are on the Advent Journey. This is a season to prepare to welcome Jesus in a special way this Christmas. The welcome space within needs to be uncluttered. Being called to repent will certainly help.

Calling the scribes and pharisees vipers, John was challenging their honour because they treated people unjustly and oppressively, contrary to the honour with which they had been blessed. Let our space to welcome Jesus be honourable and dignified. A space that emanates kindness, compassion and a calming serenity. A space in which the infant Jesus will feel at home. A space that breathes our desire for peace and justice, hope and trust. Jesus comes to renew all that is good in our lives so our fear of being unworthy and therefore unwelcoming of Jesus is utterly misplaced.

A story:

A water bearer carried two large pots on the ends of a pole which he carried across his neck. One of the pots had a crack in it, while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full quantity of water. The cracked pot arrived only half full.

For two years this happened daily, with the bearer delivering only one and half pots full of water to his house.

The perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments but the poor cracked pot was ashamed and miserable of its imperfection accomplishing only half of what it had been made to do.

After two years of perceived bitter failure, the cracked pot spoke to the water bearer one day by the stream. *"I am ashamed of myself, and I want to apologize to you. I have been able to deliver only half my load because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your house. Because of my flaws, you have to do all of this work and you never receive full value for your efforts."*

The bearer said to the pot, *"Did you not notice that there were flowers only on your side of the path not on the other pot's side? That's because I have always known about your flaw, and I planted flower seeds on that side of the path, and every day on our return, you've watered them. For two years I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate the table. Without you being just the way you are, there would not be this beauty to grace the house."*

We are only too aware of the cracks and failings in our lives but nothing in us should cause us undue shame. Our uniqueness and imperfection are as dear to God as our strengths. Jesus comes to teach us not to be afraid of our failings, however bad, for God will use them to bring beauty and strength into the lives of others and our world because of our weaknesses - all the more reason then for us to welcome Jesus.

I'm sorry," said the assistant in the flower shop, "we don't have any potted geraniums.....

"Would African violets do instead?"

The customer sadly replied, *"No, it was geraniums my wife told me to water while she was Away."*

A little girl asks her mommy "Mommy, how soon is Christmas?"

"Not long." replies her mother, "Why do you ask?"

"I was just wondering if it was near enough for me to start being good!"