

## Second Sunday of Advent

Mr. and Mrs. Brown had two sons. One was named Mind Your Own Business & the other was named Trouble. One day the two boys decided to play hide and seek. Trouble hid while Mind Your Own Business counted to one hundred. Mind Your Own Business began looking for his brother behind garbage cans and bushes. Then he started looking in and under cars until a policeman approached him and asked, "What are you doing?" "Playing a game," the boy replied. "What is your name?" the officer questioned. "Mind Your Own Business." Furious the policeman inquired, "Are you looking for trouble?!" The boy replied, "Why, yes."

Dear Friends,

In every season, there is a call for repentance. A periodical reminder is helpful for all of us to check for ourselves how we are doing. During Advent and Lent, the readings help us to reflect about ourselves and celebrate the feasts meaningfully in a solemn way. There is an inspection for everything at a certain period of time, whether it is our body or some property or other things. The church has designed two seasons to check on our inner life and our spiritual life.

We have a beautiful first reading from the Book of Isaiah. The prophet brings an ideal world atmosphere. When a new king comes, these things will happen. There are two specific clarifications about the future Messiah. The first one is the character and the origin of Messiah. It was verified with Jesus. The second thing is of his kingdom. This passage is called Messianic Prophecy. The way it is, it brings the harmony of Paradise. All the animals sit together and live together.

This prophecy was only partly verified in some later kings, but fully verified only in Jesus the true Messiah. According to Isaiah's prophecy this future Messianic King will rule forever because the Spirit of God will rest upon him and remain with him (Is 11:2), and that he will be equipped with the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit of God— wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord (Is 11:2). Isaiah foresees that this king will establish the kingdom of God, not by force of human will and military power, but by offering his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sin of the world. Isaiah hopes for a new world that brings peace and Justice.

In the Gospel John calls for repentance. John the Baptist expected the messiah to come with that kind of power. His concerns were justice, repentance, and asceticism. He warned people of an approaching time of reckoning and expected the longed-for messiah to come precisely as a violent fire, a winnowing fan that would separate the bad from the

good and burn up the former with a righteousness that came straight from God. He addressed two of the Jewish authorities and rendered a hard invitation for repentance.

In order to reach the ideal world or messianic kingdom, we need a conversion of hearts and minds. The sacrament of reconciliation brings that conversion. But today we feel like we can ask forgiveness directly to God. The sacrament of reconciliation brings the fruits of salvation. It gives you inner freedom.

John the Baptist asks us to show our repentance in the way of bearing fruits. He called his people to set things right. We are also called to set things right with God. A radical conversion is expected on us.

John's preaching of the coming of the Lord is a key theme of the Advent season. As John's message prepared the way for Jesus in the first century, we, too, are called to prepare ourselves for Jesus' coming. We respond to John's message by our repentance and reform in our lives. We are also called to be prophets of Christ, who announce by our lives, as John did, the coming of the Lord.