



## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

### THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT: December 11, 2022

Dear Parishioners,

The Advent Season is a time to reflect and pray about our lives in Christ. The vantage point of our prayer is not from afar, or in some vague, abstract way, but rather very intimately. It is like children overhearing their parents talk about how proud they are about their schoolwork and what they are planning to give them for Christmas. Our Advent prayer is about us — about how our God loves us and talks about us each day.

This Advent focus comes from the Nativity gospels. We must realize that the gospels are rooted in a real historical person, Jesus, a person who lived two thousand years ago, and not a mythical figure or religious idea. John the Baptist, Herod, Mary and Joseph and the whole cast of characters help us to see the presence of God is in our lives and the forces within that seek to pull us in a different way.

The disciples who followed Him were real people with so many of the same human flaws that we fight within ourselves and outside us each day. The disciples ran away in cowardice and fear after Jesus' arrest. Despite their weaknesses, God transformed them and pointed them out in mission.

For us, we must be careful not to limit the meaning of mission. It should not be relegated to churchy things alone, as important as those activities are.

Mission means much more. The justice, healing and hope that are born anew within the disciples and us must be lived out at home and in the workplace. The Spirit, which we become aware of through our prayer life, sets out to make visible God's mercy and love through our lives of humble service.

Mission leads us to forgiving our brother or sister, being ethical at work, spending more time with our family, working at eliminating an addiction, and actively supporting a charity. Our lives of mission are all manifestations of the goodness of God breaking through us, and enabling us to pour out our lives for those in need and for the common good. Christ's presence is always with us, but through our actions. He is made visible to us and the world in a special way at Christmas.

While we recognize the weaknesses of our life, we remain hopeful and confident that God will continue to reveal Himself to us now and in the future. The Kingdom has not fully arrived, but we do our part to help each other to remain open to His coming by concretely living a life of faith, hope and love.

The "day" of judgment will come. The types of lives we lead do matter.



*Father Mike Meany*