

A Coffee with Alessio



The Second Sunday of Advent - Year B

Lectionary:

First Reading: Isaiah 40:1-5,9-11

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 84(85):9-14

Second Reading: 2 Peter 3:8-14

Gospel: Mark 1:1-8

On the Second and Third Sundays of Advent (Year B) the readings bring Saint John the Baptist the fore. He comes to warn us to “prepare a way for the Lord”, to tear every mountain down and to raise every valley up.

We might be wondering what on earth this business of valleys and mountains has got to with Advent or Jesus for that matter. Well, the mountains symbolise pride and the valleys symbolise humility. We must not let pride take control of our lives. We should take pride in everything we do, not be self-proud. Likewise, humility is one of the best virtues we could ever possess. So back to the Scripture readings for this Sunday. We could read and interpret them as follows: bring down our pride to low levels, increase our humility. In this way we will truly prepare a way for the Lord.

At the end of the Gospel Reading this Sunday we hear John the Baptist say the following: “I have baptized you with water, but he (Jesus) will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” So, by our Baptism we have been called to follow Christ. In bringing down our pride, we acknowledge that God is in control of our lives, and we need to put our trust in Him. God wants us to be in the passenger seat, not the driver’s seat. This week let us find ways to help our neighbour – it could be a friendly chat, a simple text message to see how they are going, or just making someone a coffee. All of these simple acts of kindness are concrete ways of preparing for Jesus’ coming among us on Christmas Day.

When we put others first, especially at our own inconvenience, we are definitely bringing mountains down and raising valleys high. The Lord will smile upon us for our kindness towards others in these times!

The readings also highlight John the Baptist as "a voice in the wilderness". Sometimes, we too can feel like that as though no one is listening to what we are saying or nobody cares. That should not stop us from doing what is right. It is better to suffer for doing right than to go along with the crowd.

Speaking of a voice in the wilderness, yesterday (3 December) was the feast of Saint Francis Xavier. He was a Jesuit missionary who left Spain to evangelize peoples in many places who did not know Christ. He certainly helped people to prepare for the coming of the Lord. You can read more about Saint Francis Xavier on our website. So, greetings to our friends in the Geraldton Diocese and a happy feast day yesterday for the patron of your diocese!

Musical suggestions this week include: "Prepare the Way" by Brian Boniwell. This hymn has a very good text and simple tune and one that children can pick up the refrain easily. "On Jordan's Bank, the Baptist's Cry" is another suggestion.

In keeping with my simpler desserts for Advent, this week I am suggesting an apple and cinnamon muffin from Muffin Break. That with a flat white will be a good way to mark the Second Sunday of Advent.

Till next week enjoy your coffee and cake!

Mr Alessio Loiacono
Music Field Officer

Friday 4 December 2020