

From the Pastor's Office

2nd Sunday of Advent

Familiar Advent themes come to visit us again. "A shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse." The only time I hear the word stump is when I walk on the trail and there is a bit of a tree rotting on the side of the pathway. For all intents and purposes this stump is dead. The rot has begun to set in. Then one day without realizing it a shoot appears to grow out of the stump. There is life in this old bird yet. The biblical background to this image lies in the fact that the prophecy of the Messiah was a very ancient prophecy handed down from one generation to the next. At some point you kind of get tired of waiting. You move onto something else. That becomes an old wives tale. There was always a remnant of the faithful who waited for the coming of the Savior. These are called the Anawim in the bible. The *Anawim* of the Old Testament were the poor of every sort: the vulnerable, the marginalized, and socio-economically oppressed, those of lowly status without earthly power. In fact, they depended totally on God for whatever their survival. It is often the Anawim who are the people of great faith in our community. Their lowliness makes them lean on God for help and support. We have lots of Anawim in our community. Lots of them live under the overpasses and in the shelters. The Anawim of St. Catherine's live in the shadows. Famous Biblical people like Mary and Joseph numbered among the Anawim. John the Baptist pops his head up again. He is the voice crying in the wilderness telling us to prepare the Way of the Lord. We have lots of people in our society who are the voices crying in the wilderness. Today they have to compete with Corporate and Commercial America. It is hard to be heard when Santa Claus is ringing his bell a few doors down. Deck the Halls with boughs of Holly, falalalalalalala. But we keep going. St. Catherine's is busy preparing for the coming of the Messiah. Our choirs are rehearsing. People are putting up decorations to make the Church nice. Other people go out delivering our Christmas presents to needy and deserving people. This is a season when we share from our bounty. We don't need all of that stuff. We can share some of it. All of it makes us feel a bit Christmassy. We like that. We also have our Parish Christmas party coming soon. It's all great. We proclaim the message that the Messiah is coming. Prepare the Way for Him. This is good news. Christmas brings messages of hope and joy. We should focus on those.



With love,
Fr. Pat