

# From the PASTOR'S DESK



## Lighting Candles in the Dark

Every human person is born in the night, born in the darkness of Original Sin. But each of us, at the moment of our Baptism, becomes a flame ignited by the Holy Spirit. It is the light of Christ, whose life we now share.

We are like that first Advent candle inflamed by the Spirit to proclaim it will be daylight soon. Through our lives and moral choices, we prepare the world for the Coming of the Lord. As the fire consumes the candle, we are given the grace to become, in Christ's likeness, a sacrifice of love, offered to God.

The lighting of Advent candles reminds us to Come, walk in the light of the Lord. We are not lone flames but are called together to scatter the darkness of the night – the darkness of sin in our families, our communities, our society, our nation.

To dispel the darkness, each flame has to consume the candle wax. To shine with love, we have to sacrifice. Only by Christ-like love transforming our own lives can we transform the world.

The sacrifice every Christian has to make is a sacrifice of his own way of being with all his familiar sinful desires of the body and acquired ways of thinking. We are asked to renew our minds, not as the world thinks, but as Christ does.

Every day brings new opportunities to train ourselves in virtue. If we sleep-walk through life with our wills and intellects drowsily accepting the norms and expectations of our culture, the light we shed will be minimal and might even be extinguished. In our second reading today, St. Paul says it is the hour now for you to awake from sleep.

This new liturgical year, this Advent, is a time for renewal. If we know and love God, if we seek to do His will above all, the flame of charity will consume the wax of our sinful selves. Then we will shine. We will shine with Christ's life.

We were told at our Baptisms, when the Lord comes may we go out to meet Him with all the saints of heaven. So, turn off the artificial lights that twinkle and charm us, and ignite again the candle lit from the true Light this Advent.

Fr. Hernan Cely

Pastor

