

Eucharistic Food For Thought This 2nd Sunday of Advent

We all have an imagination and, if exercised properly, it can bring great rewards if we apply it to the Season of Advent. Having an Advent imagination will place us in a state of mind that carries over into living in a way that makes us "eager to be found without spot or blemish before [our God], at peace."

Having an Advent imagination, then, can leave us exuberant, not exhausted, or at peace, not perplexed. And we have the imagination of John the Baptist to help us get started. Mark presents him as *"a voice ... crying out in the desert"* to the people of his day:

"Prepare the way of the Lord, / make straight his paths."

John saw Jesus coming across the desert, and the desert would blossom as he did. John was waiting for the One who had the power to change the world. "One mightier than I is coming after me." And so it is that John puts Jesus at the center of his life. And all that needed to be done was to repent and live in readiness. [Do I have an Advent imagination? Does the God spoken of by Isaiah, Second Peter, and Mark give me reason to hope, lifting me to my feet to go and meet the coming Messiah?](#)

John continues to call across the ages, to call us to a proper Advent imagination. To get through life, we often need some help to keep us moving along. Sometimes it is an imaginary pony that lifts us up and carries us awhile. But as believers, there is something no less appealing to the imagination yet far more substantial. And that is the Word of God. It offers a vision that pulls us onto our feet and into the future.

The Word of God sets before us a God as tender as a shepherd who feeds his flock and lifts them to his bosom; as patient as one for whom a thousand years are like one day and who waits as long as is divinely possible for us to change. [Can I hear God calling me to change? What is he asking of me?](#)

And His love is burning with the fire of the Holy Spirit that makes all things new, especially our battered, broken down, beaten-up hearts. God's Word is spoken to tired hearts that occasionally need to be carried, to weary people whose imaginations sometimes falter.

For the present, it is our task to hear his voice. And to live in a way that we practice for that day even now, because He comes even now, calling our names. [Do you hear his gentle, quiet voice?](#)

When the priest says, "Body of Christ," that is our Lord calling to us, coming in a way that calls us to intimate communion. These words call us to an act of faith and to action: "Receive this and be the Body of Christ in the world."

John turns attention from himself to "One mightier than I" who "will baptize ... with the Holy Spirit." Advent is a time to re-focus our attention on the One who continues to come to give us the Holy Spirit; on our part, there is only need for a humble and contrite heart.

[Am I truly humble? What is my heart like?](#)

Deacon Hicks