



2nd SUNDAY IN ADVENT **YEAR B – DECEMBER 10, 2017**

Today we celebrate the second Sunday of this Holy Season of Advent. We will spend a lot of time and energy getting ready for Christmas as we do each year. There is nothing wrong with that but hopefully we won't lose sight of the "reason for the season". We need to remember it is the birthday of Jesus.

At Mass on each of the four Sundays of Advent, we take time to focus our attention on preparing our hearts and minds in accord with the Revelation of God.

Today, Isaiah tells us again to prepare the way of the Lord and he tells us where to do that. He says, "In the desert, prepare the way of the Lord." Translated in today's language it means, "Go to a place of silence alone and examine your spiritual life." If you see nothing that needs to be changed, you need to spend more time in the "desert" - more time in "silence". That kind of "silence" is not the absence of noise; it is the absence of self.

There is an old story about a fabulously wealthy king who lived in a fabulously beautiful palace. But in spite of his great wealth, he had a simple heart and a deep, sincere desire to find God. He read many books. He consulted wise men, He prayed in the gold-covered palace chapel. But to no avail.

One night while lying on his soft satin bed, surrounded by gold, the king was pondering why he was having so much trouble finding God. Suddenly he heard a terrible racket on the roof of his palace. He went to the balcony and shouted, "Who's up there. What's going on?"

A voice, which he recognized to be that of an old hermit who lived in a forest nearby, shouted back, "I'm looking for my goat. She's lost and I'm trying to find her." The king shouted back, "You stupid fool, what makes you think you'll find your goat on my roof?"

The hermit shouted back even louder, "You stupid king, what makes you think you'll find God in the places you're looking. He's not in gold and silver and fine linen. He's in the people of your kingdom." That king looked for God in the wrong places. Do we?

Advent is the time when we prepare to find the Triune God in the right places. One of those right places is a little stable in Bethlehem many years ago. We find God there every Christmas when we celebrate the birthday of Jesus. He is the "God beside us". He is the Son of the "God above us".

We can also find the "God within us" if we know how to look. Advent is the time to work on our *spiritual lives* as we prepare to celebrate Christmas once again. It's a time to step away for a while, from the "noise of the holiday" and focus on the "reason for the season". It's time to prepare *ourselves*.



That Preparation is done in "silence".

