



2nd SUNDAY of ADVENT ***YEAR C – December 9, 2018***

Today we celebrate the second Sunday of this holy season of Advent. We spend a lot of time and energy getting ready to celebrate the birthday of Jesus. Here at Mass, we set aside all the commercial preparations. All those things are good in themselves. But here, we take time to focus on preparing our hearts and minds in accord with the words of the prophet John the Baptist. He tells us again to prepare the way of the Lord and he tells us how to do that. He says, reform, reshape, refashion your life. He reminds us that sometimes, we look for God in the wrong places.

There is an old story about a very wealthy king who lived in a beautiful palace. But despite his wealth and all that it could provide, the king had a simple and deep desire to find God. He read many books. He consulted wise men, He prayed in his private, gold-covered 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 a 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 will find your goat on my roof?”

The hermit shouted back, “You stupid king! What makes you think you will find God in all the places you are looking. You won't find Him in gold and silver and fine linen. He's in the people of your kingdom”. Sometimes, like that king, we too look for God in the wrong places.

Advent is the time and season when we prepare ourselves to find God again in a humble stable in Bethlehem - not in the palace of kings. Each time a child is born, it's God's way of telling us that he believes in the future. That's why God came to us as a little child. He was approachable to everyone.

John the Baptist wants to jar us from our apathy and complacency. He says, “Reform, reshape, refashion your life, for the kingdom of God is at hand.” It's not on a map, it's within us right now.

We can't see Jesus in the stable in Bethlehem. That happened a long time ago. But we can see Him in each other if we know how to look. To do that, we need to reform, reshape, refashion our lives. It can be done.

To be human is to change, to be perfect is to have changed often. Once again, for a few moments in silence, reflect on what you need to change about yourself, to get ready for the birthday of Jesus. What gift will you bring to the feast?

