

Homily - Advent 2 - Year C - December 9, 2018

So, what's it going to be? What do you have planned? Where will you be? How are you getting there? So, what's is going to be this year?

These are all the types of questions that we ask and answer during these weeks of Advent, weeks in preparation for Christmas.

Amid the hustle, bustle, hype, sales, countdowns, and bargains, there is still that question we must answer: "So, what's it going to be for Christmas this year?"

When you leave church today, there is one way to answer that question along with the other questions I asked. In church, there is a different way to answer those same questions.

Outside of church, the answers are things like: We're going to my husband's family for Christmas dinner; we have lots of shopping to do still; I feel like I live in the kitchen getting all the food ready that we need to have.

But why do we do all of this? That, my friends, is the big difference between Christmas as celebrated by Christians and a nebulous holiday that happens to occur on December 25. The political correctness has reached the level of absurd such that the word Christmas has practically disappeared from the public arena. If aliens came to visit the earth, they would observe Americans in a mad frenzy to celebrate a holiday without a real name, without a clear purpose, and without any perceived value except spending money, having lots of food, and being in a mad rush for several weeks prior to this magic date of December 25.

We just heard readings filled with mysterious language and mysterious people. The reading from Baruch: "Take off your robe of mourning!"; "God will show all the earth your splendor;" "Look to the east;" "Rejoice that they are remembered by God." Then, there is Paul: "Discern what is of value, so that you may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ." Then, the strangest of all, John the Baptist: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths...the winding roads shall be made straight and the rough ways made smooth."

All of this mystery has an answer. The answer is simple, Jesus Christ. The prophecies of Baruch, the redemption preached by Paul, and the exhortations of someone greater announced by John the Baptist are all fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Let's translate that to ourselves. December 25 celebrates the birth of Christ. That is very plain, clear, and the total reason why we do anything

special on December 25. If it were not for Jesus Christ, there would be no Christmas. Why are so many people trying to erase the Christian meaning of Christmas?

Because God became man, we have cause to celebrate. Because Christ became one of us, we celebrate the forgiveness of our sins. Because there is a Jesus, we know that there is eternal life. Because Jesus lived the way he did and taught us to do the same, we have cause to rejoice in and celebrate and share the love with which he loved us. Our Christmas meals bring us together to celebrate as a community this Christ, the source of our unity. The gifts that we share are expressions of our concern for one another and not mere trinkets. Our decorations should proudly display our faith and joy in the one whom we celebrate.

So, rejoice in the fact that we have a reason for doing all that we do during these weeks. We know what and why we are doing it.

So, this year, Christmas. Will you celebrate the Christmas that is out there or the Christmas that has its origin right here? So, what will it be for Christmas this year?