

A Note from the Pastor

Dear Parishioners,

Winter weather is setting in and Christmas is only two weeks and one or two days away. During this time of Advent, we should be trying to prepare the way of the Lord. Not necessarily exactly like John the Baptist did eating locusts and honey, living in the wilderness, but rather seeking to set our hearts on Jesus. A towering figure in the scriptures during Advent, John sought to do God's will in all things and he recognized Jesus as the Son of God and the need to follow in the ways of Jesus. John made many sacrifices and he lived in the truth. Even when it was difficult, John stayed the course. He gave up much to be an example for others, a voice crying out in the wilderness. Think of how John suffered for his faith in God. It is not that God wanted him to suffer, but John was true to his beliefs and he was willing even to give up his life. In the end, he did. He did everything for the Lord. He prepared the way for Jesus. He helped others find the Lord.

For us today, we can ask ourselves how Saint John the Baptist can help us and how we can prepare the way for the Lord? John certainly gives us a good example of holding fast to faith. Not even challenges or suffering deterred him. He dealt with human weakness and sin, even in the highest religious and civil authorities of his day, and yet he remained strong in faith. He never stopped looking for Jesus and he helped others come to know Jesus as well. St. John intercedes for us.

To be honest, it is easy also in our day to be discouraged because of religious or civil authorities, not to mention other celebrities and ordinary people as well. We know too well that no one is perfect, including ourselves, and sometimes people give in to pure evil. Only Jesus is perfect and he promises to help us and forgive us and strengthen his Church. That means the whole Church and each of us as individuals.

We are bound to be disheartened at times, perhaps with little desire to persevere in doing good because it might seem useless. Yet to think of John the Baptist and how he had his mind, heart and soul set on the things of heaven and God's goodness and love for us, can help us to use the time of Advent to live our faith and rejoice in the promises of Christ. Jesus came into the world as a child, he will return in glory, and yet he is always with us to lead us and bless us with his love. We should never cease to ask the Lord to come to us with his grace.

Sincerely in Christ,

Monsignor Giandurco