

December 06, 2020
2nd Sunday of Advent
Is 40:1-5, 9-11
Ps 85:9-10, 11-12, 13-14
2 Pt 3:8-14
Mk 1:1-8

FIX THE INNER PARTS!

A man once owned a large and expensive clock crafted in Switzerland. He kept the clock in a window, where it was seen by passersby who set their watches by it. But something was wrong with the clock. Its hands habitually showed the wrong time. So, the man spent considerable energy every day in turning the clock's hands to the right positions. This went on for several years, which kept the owner weary. One day someone suggested, **"Instead of wasting your energy in correcting the hands, why don't you fix the clock's inner parts?"** **"What a tremendous idea!"** the owner exclaimed in astonishment and delight. **"I never thought of that!"**

We are now on the 2nd Sunday of Advent. This season invites us to 'fix our inner parts.' It means that we have to focus more on renewing our 'inside' rather than the 'outside.' Paraphrasing the suggestion of the man in the story, **"Instead of wasting our energy in changing the outside, why don't we fix in renewing the inside?"**

Why do we have to 'fix the inside' as we wait for our Master's return? We have to focus on the inside – our hearts - simply because that is where our Lord Jesus wants to reside. He wants to be there, not only when he comes again, but even at this very moment. He wants to be there because our hearts matter to him. Hence, we take this opportunity to look and check our hearts. **Is it weigh down by anxieties of daily life? Is it drowsy with desire for power and fame? Is it harboring resentment or bitterness? Is it full of jealousy seeing the success of others?** With almost 10 months into this pandemic, **what has our hearts become? Which one occupies it – fear or trust in the Lord? Does it continue to hope in God's goodness? Is it beating for God's will or more on our own will?**

In our gospel proclaimed we are presented with the character of John the Baptist. He is the voice crying out in the desert that says: **"Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths."** He is calling us to repentance. He is pointing us to prepare ourselves for Christ's coming. He is leading us, not to himself, but to the light and truth of Christ. In his proclamation, he is targeting our hearts – the core of our being. He is challenging us to do 'heart-work' in making the paths of the Lord straight.

Yes, the call to repentance targets our hearts. It is a call to get rid of what makes our hearts hardened. It is a call to break away from indifference, selfishness, arrogance, greed, and other vices. The call to repentance challenges us to turn away from sins and start turning towards God. When we repent we are submitting ourselves to the Lord, allowing him to take us by the hand and lead us wherever he wants. The question is – **are we ready to allow the Lord to lead us wherever he wants?** If we say we are ready, **will it be reflected the way we**

share our gifts of time, talent, and treasure in making His presence visible in our world?

Sir Walter Raleigh was an English writer, poet, soldier, politician, courtier, spy and explorer. He was born in England on Jan 22, 1552 and died on Oct 29, 1618. When he was condemned to be executed, Sir Walter Raleigh was asked by the executioner which way he would lay his head. He replied, **"So the heart be right, it is no matter which way the head lies."**

The Season of Advent is very particular in making our hearts right. Making it right starts with sincere repentance from the sins committed. Making it right entails a conviction to turn away from vices and setting in motion to grow in Christ's values. Making it right will surely bring us peace as we await the return of our Master, Jesus Christ.

In this celebration, therefore, let us ask the Lord Jesus to give us the grace of humility so we can sincerely repent from our sins committed especially in the context of the Sacrament of Reconciliation/Confession. May our sincere repentance cleanse our hearts from vices and grow in what matters to God.

God bless us all!