

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent B

*(A voice of one crying out in the wilderness)*

An elderly gentleman feared his wife was getting hard of hearing. So one day he called her doctor to make an appointment to have her hearing tested. The doctor made an appointment to have her hearing test in two weeks. And meanwhile there is a simple test the husband could do to give the doctor some idea of the state of her problem. "Here is what you do," said the doctor. "Start out about 40 feet away from her, and in a normal conversational speaking tone see if she hears you. If not, go to 30 feet, then 20 feet, and so on until you get a response."

That evening, the wife was in the kitchen cooking dinner. And he was in the living room. He said to himself, "I am about 40 feet away, let us see what happens." Then in a normal tone he asked, "Honey, what's for supper?" No response. So he moved to the other end of the room, about 30 feet from his wife and repeated, "Honey, what's for supper?" Still no response. Next, he moved into the dining room where he was about 20 feet from his wife and asked, "Honey, what's for supper?" Again he got no response. So he walked up to the kitchen door only 10 feet away, "Honey, what's for supper?" Again there is no response. So he waked right up behind her and said, "Honey, what's for supper?" The wife shouted, "Stop it Carl, for the fifth time, it is Chicken!"

It is easy to find fault with others while we are oblivious of the same fault in us. In a way, when we are full of ourselves, we are blinded. We often find the very limitation that we have, to be a limitation of others. In psychiatry 'projection' is a defense mechanism by which your own traits and emotions are attributed to someone else. When you point a finger at someone, you should remember that three of your fingers are pointing at yourself. Do you recognize and admit your mistakes and faults? Recognizing and owning up responsibility for your mistakes is good for your wellbeing and spiritual growth. Advent is an appropriate time to accept our sins and ask for forgiveness from God and from our neighbors.

A soul that does not repent is a soul in the wilderness. Wilderness is a wild and uncultivated region uninhabited or inhabited only by wild animals. It is a tract of wasteland. The word *wilderness* derives from the notion of "wildness"—in other words, that which is not controlled by humans. The word wilderness is originated from the Old English word, "Wild-eor-ness." It is 'wild+deer+ness.' When sin enslaves us we become the dry and arid desert land. We become wilderness. Our hearts become wasteland. Wild animals live in this wasteland.

In the wilderness of our life, Advent is "the voice crying out in the wilderness," to prepare the way of the Lord. The scripture says, "In the desert prepare the way of the LORD! Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God! Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill shall be made low; the rugged land shall be made a plain, the rough country, a broad valley." These words are primarily the words of comfort of the prophet Isaiah to the people of Israel. They were in exile.

Now they are looking for a savior like Moses to deliver them. Moses delivered them from bondage and slavery to Egypt. The glory of the LORD was revealed during the time of Moses, and all people saw it. It is the promise of God that the people in bondage will see a Moses like leader to deliver them again.

The deliverance of Israel came but there was no deliverer. Emperor Cyrus let the people go back to their country. But Cyrus was not a leader like Moses from within Israel. Messiah must be the Son of David. So these words are pointing to Jesus Christ the Messiah. Listen to what Isaiah also said, "Here is your God! Here comes with power the Lord GOD."

Jesus comes to deliver us from bondage of sin and temptation. We don't know when the day of the Lord will be and that is why today's call is to be busy in preparing the way of the Lord.