



School Sisters of Notre Dame

ADVENT WEEK 1

DECEMBER 3, 2017

INTRODUCTORY PRAYER—A call to intimacy with God

Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109) PROSLOGION
(adapted for inclusive language)

“Come now, insignificant [one], leave behind for a time your preoccupations; seclude yourself for a while from your disquieting thoughts. Turn aside now from heavy cares and disregard your wearisome tasks. Attend for a while to God and rest for a time in [God].

“Enter the inner chamber of your mind; shut out all else except God and whatever is of aid to you in seeking [God]; after closing the chamber door, think upon your God. Speak now, my whole heart; speak now to God: I seek Your countenance; Your countenance, O Lord, do I seek. So come now, Lord my God, teach my heart where and how to seek You, where and how to find You.

“If You are not here, Lord where shall I seek You in Your absence? But if You are everywhere, why do I not behold You in Your presence? Surely You dwell in light inaccessible. Yet, where is this inaccessible light? Or how shall I approach unto a light inaccessible? Or who will lead me to and into this light so that in it I may behold You?”

REFLECTION

Christmas lures us because God is Absolute “Goodness and Light;” and, as the Christmas carolers sing to assure us, The Christ will come, will bring us a flash of insight into the God of our longing. At least momentarily during the season of Advent our life will make sense, our purpose will be satisfied Our human limitations can perceive and absorb the goodness and light of the season only in flashes, with a glimpse here and there. Mostly, we are left with the option to allow our friends, family, and environment to drop petals along the path toward the age-old Promise where the Almighty Word, in poetic imagery, will meet us on that path because he “leapt down from heaven” to become one of us.

Since last Christmas, life has grown increasingly complicated. The first Advent reading, (**Isaiah 63: 2-7**) reminds us that it is we who have wandered from the path of the ancients. We have allowed earthly distractions to deflect our orientation toward God to the degree that, if we are to encounter the divine on the path, You, God, will need to “rend the heavens and come down, with the mountains quaking.” (**Isaiah 63:19, b**)

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

1. What are the mountains in my life that need to be shaken to help me find God in my place of prayer, in the room apart as Anselm of Canterbury recommends, with the door of daily distractions closed?
2. Where are the places within myself that can be the gifts to my friends that they need, more than any material gift? What can the God-man, Jesus, love in me that I might, in turn, bring the God of Christmas to the broken world?
3. Scripture says, “Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.” What is God saying to me through The Word?

First Sunday of Advent

Lectionary: 2

READING 1 [IS 63:16B-17, 19B; 64:2-7](#)

(<http://www.usccb.org/bible/isaiah/63:16>)

You, LORD, are our father,
our redeemer you are named forever.
Why do you let us wander, O LORD, from your ways,
and harden our hearts so that we fear you not?
Return for the sake of your servants,
the tribes of your heritage.
Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down,
with the mountains quaking before you,
while you wrought awesome deeds we could not hope for,
such as they had not heard of from of old.
No ear has ever heard, no eye ever seen, any God but you
doing such deeds for those who wait for him.

Would that you might meet us doing right,
that we were mindful of you in our ways!
Behold, you are angry, and we are sinful;
all of us have become like unclean people,
all our good deeds are like polluted rags;
we have all withered like leaves,
and our guilt carries us away like the wind.
There is none who calls upon your name,
who rouses himself to cling to you;
for you have hidden your face from us
and have delivered us up to our guilt.
Yet, O LORD, you are our father;
we are the clay and you the potter:
we are all the work of your hands.

Song Suggestion: *My Soul in Stillness Waits*, by Marty Haugen:

<https://youtu.be/OkQVGu6McTE>

PS 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19

<http://www.usccb.org/bible/psalms/80:2>

1 COR 1:3-9

<http://www.usccb.org/bible/1corinthians/1:3>

MK 13:33-37

<http://www.usccb.org/bible/mark/13:33>