

Commentary on the Gospel for Mon, Jan 12th 2015

As we enter into this New Year, we recall the resolutions that we made and the hopes we have for 2015. At times these promises can seem quite fleeting. The busyness of life as normal can overwhelm us as we bear the weight of work, study, and other duties. Yet, if we pause for a moment, we might remember how way back during Advent, we were all called to prepare the way of the Lord. We prepared ourselves to receive the refulgence of God's glory and the very imprint of God's being, as we hear Jesus described in the first reading from Hebrews. We opened our hearts to receive Jesus and with him the graces we needed to strengthen our faith, to renew our hope, to enkindle our love. Once we prepared the way for Jesus to enter into our hearts, we celebrated his birth at Christmas.

All that can seem like a distant memory now that we are back into our old routine. It was a pleasant break – or at least it was some sort of break – from the normal. In today's Gospel, Simon and Andrew, James and John, were also living their normal lives as fishermen. Like us during Advent, they may very well have taken time from their busy routines to prepare the way of the Lord when they heard of John the Baptist. But by the time Jesus came by, the hopes for the coming Messiah were seemingly put aside and they were definitely back to their old routine. Nonetheless, upon hearing the mighty words of Christ's call, each one of them immediately chooses to leave behind the nets of his normal life to follow the path of Jesus.

So, perhaps this Gospel is an invitation for each of us to revisit the ways in which we prepared for the coming of the Lord and the hopes we have for this year. In order to see those hopes to fulfilment, we cannot merely go back to living life as normal. If we expect the fulfilment of the words of the psalmist that the heavens proclaim God's justice and that all peoples see God's glory, we must not allow ourselves to go back to life as it was before we opened our hearts to Jesus. For Jesus says to each of us, the time of fulfilment is here. So, we must ask ourselves what nets we need to leave behind to be free to walk with Jesus, to be open to the transformative power of God's love and mercy, and to trust in the power of God's grace active in our lives.

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