

Commentary on the Gospel for Sat, Dec 1st 2018

Waiting can be quite a passive experience or existence. There can be anxieties about whether or not we are waiting in the right place or at the correct time. When watching carefully for one specific person or thing, we can easily miss other persons or objects which might also be of personal interest. Watching takes active patience and receptive availability.

Our First Reading for this Eucharistic liturgy for the day before the Advent season, announces some rather poetic and picturesque activities. Within all the beauty and fruitful images, a light will replace lamps and even the sunshine. Very soon, God will be with the holy servants, again!

The words we hear from Luke's Gospel are a call to be attentive, alert and available, not only to the coming of God, but to the very presence of the Creator Who continues creating. The nature of love is to reveal itself. For humans that is always a limited activity. Real love is never completely revealed no matter how many and how perfect our words might be. No gesture of love can ever express love's depth. This is our basic human poverty. When we say or do acts of love, we wonder and even ask the other, "Do you know what I mean?"

God does not love us as if God could choose not to love. God's love is not a divine choice, but the divine is love choicelessly revealing, always.

The Gospel is urging us Advent-folks to be aware of the words and gestures which this God is sending, offering, revealing constantly and that we, just sometimes, see, hear, receive. To be alert is to be aware, in our limited manner, that we are being invited! Divine Love comes to each of us in quite personal and non-standard ways, which cannot be compared to the ways God comes to others. God comes to us the ways we get come-to.

now there are radio waves going right through my head and yet it is quite quiet here in my room. I do not have a receiver built-in to pick them up. I could reach over and turn my radio on and bingo, music and noise, (usually the same thing). We are invited during these days of Advent to a receptivity to the invitations of God's presence and presents. Advent is a liturgical season. Advent is also a way of responding to invitations offered in all the ways during our other days of the year. We probably will be invited to Christmas parties long before Christmas and to many of them we will bring gifts or dishes. We can feel obligated to have something in our arms or hands upon arriving.

The Gospel urges us to be alert. I would suggest that our arriving with empty arms and available hands might be our Advent posture and form of prayer. This is the season to practice being attentive to invitations and attentive to an awareness of the closeness of the God Who proclaims, "Very soon I will be with you again." We await these days of God's invitations to receive, respond and rejoice.

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