

Commentary on the Gospel for Fri, Dec 7th 2018

Memorial of Saint Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

Advent, a time of waiting in hope. This hope is not simply wishful thinking or an optimism that things will turn out okay. Our hope is based on God's promise of salvation and on the faith that God will not let us down.

Today's readings are really wonderful! Advent readings in general are wonderful! They fill me with joyful hope. In reflecting upon these readings, I asked myself, "why is this time of advent such a hopeful time for me?" Because in fact, I often feel very drained, beaten and in despair by all the awful things going on in the world, in our society: wars for political and economic gain, climate catastrophes, forced migration due to war, land mismanaging, famine, and lack of opportunity; the way immigrants are treated in our country, racism, intolerance, gun violence, ..., but yet, when I read these passages I felt filled with hope. I was thankful for that, but where did it come from? I realized that one very important thing that makes advent a hopeful time is the fact that I know that the Incarnation already happened, that God is with us, that God's promise has been fulfilled and that God's kingdom has started with Jesus. This is not a small thing! Passages like Isaiah's not only give me hope, but also call me to action, advocacy and prayer with and for the world.

Another thing that struck me, was Jesus' line to the blind men in the gospel passage:

"Do you believe that I can do this?"

"Let it be done for you according to your faith." (Vv. 28, 30)

I would like to invite us to ponder these two lines in light of everything that might be worrying or overwhelming us and ask for a stronger faith.

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