

Advent...and Learning to Wait

The meaning of Advent is often lost in the race from Thanksgiving turkey to Black Friday sales to a hurried and hectic Christmas. What are we missing in the rush? Sister Joan Chittister, OSB, offers her thoughts:

“Advent is about learning to wait. It is about not having to know exactly what is coming tomorrow, only that whatever it is, it is of the essence of sanctification for us. Every piece of it, some hard, some uplifting, is sign of the work of God alive in us. We are becoming as we go. We learn in Advent to stay in the present, knowing that only the present well-lived can possibly lead us to the fullness of life.

Advent relieves us of our commitment to the frenetic in a fast-paced world. It slows us down. It makes us think. It makes us look beyond today to the “great tomorrow” of life. Without Advent, moved only by the race to nowhere that exhausts the world around us, we could be so frantic with trying to consume and control this life that we fail to develop within ourselves a taste for the spirit that does not die and will not slip through our fingers like melted snow.

It is while waiting for the coming of the reign of God, Advent after Advent, that we come to realize that its coming depends on us. What we do will either hasten or slow, sharpen or dim our own commitment to do our part to bring it.

Waiting — that cold, dry period of life when nothing seems to be enough and something else beckons within us — is the grace that Advent comes to bring. It stands before us, within us, pointing to the star for which the wise ones from the East are only icons of ourselves.

We all want something more. Advent asks the question, what is it for which you are spending your life? What is the star you are following now? And where is that star in its present radiance in your life leading you? Is it a place that is really comprehensive enough to equal the breadth of the human soul?”

In this Advent season, we reflect upon the star we follow. We continue to work for truth, justice, and accountability. And we wait.

The Vigil Committee of Long Island Voice of the Faithful wishes you and yours a most blessed and beautiful Christmas.

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