

December 16, 2018

## ***From Fr. Jim . . .***



**Prepare the Way of the Lord.** Today's Gospel tells us that John the Baptist came to testify to the light so that all might believe through him. He, himself, was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. As we prepare the way to celebrate the Feast of Christmas, it is good to imitate John the Baptist and to remember that Christmas is not about us. It is about the light that has come into our dark world. It is about the Word of God that has taken on human form and shape. It is about the love of God in and through Jesus who has come to save us and free us from sin and death. Like John, we are to witness to this light so all might believe in Jesus.

By remembering that Christmas is always about the light of Christ who has come into the world, then even our shopping, buying, giving gifts, decorating, cooking, sharing food, welcoming family and guests can be opportunities to witness to Christ's light so that all might believe through us. I believe this is best done by our actions and attitude more so than by our words. The best way to witness to the light of Christ's presence and love, especially during this time of the year, is by clothing ourselves with Divine presence and virtues and doing our best to wear them out. Kindness, forgiveness, compassion, mercy, loving without conditions, generosity, acceptance, understanding, patience, hope and humility will always brighten a dark world or home with the presence of God and an implied invitation to believe in the love of our Savior. We, too, are not the light but we testify to the light so that all can believe.

With our prayer and worship and by living together the spiritual and corporal works of mercy, we hear and see the works of the Christ who is ever so present among us. We continue to build the kingdom that God has already started and handed onto us as we actively wait for God to come back and complete what Jesus started and what the church continues to do in His name.

We are so blessed by everyone (parishioner, partner, visitor) sharing their time, talent and treasure to build God's kingdom and to prepare the way for the Lord's return. God is present in our love for one another. Thanks for building the kingdom of God. Thanks for witnessing to the light of Christ. Thanks for witnessing to the faith and bringing others to faith. Come, Lord, Jesus. Come.

**What can I do this week in Advent?** Light the third candle on the Advent wreath and think of someone who is longing for our savior's light and love and pray for that person; Pray for the sick in our parish. Call someone you haven't talked to in a while. Volunteer to help with any preparations. Have fun and enjoy doing what needs to be done. Reflect on the Christmas song, Silent Night. Watch a good Christmas movie with popcorn, of course! Pray for anyone who is alone and afraid.