

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 11 2022

Gospel: (Matthew 11:2-11)

When John the Baptist heard in prison of the works of the Christ, he sent his disciples to Jesus with this question, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?” Jesus said to them in reply, “*Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me.*” As they were going off, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John, “*What did you go out to the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? Then what did you go out to see? Someone dressed in fine clothing? Those who wear fine clothing are in royal palaces. Then what did you go out to see? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written: Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way before you.*”

Reflection:

Jesus, in answering John’s question gives a most startling answer. He recounts an alternative world vision that is actually taking place because of his ministry: “the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them.” In other words, he is saying “Don’t take my word for it that I am who you are looking for. Look at what I’ve accomplished! The good news can be seen and touched and felt and heard in the lives of people.” This is why doubts can be appeased and all can know that Jesus is, indeed, “the one who is to come.” We are now charged to take up Jesus’ ministry. We can’t ask people to take our word for it; our actions speak for us—or our non-actions. Either we take up Jesus’s ministry or we don’t. (Living Liturgy, p. 14)

Vincentian Meditation:

John the Baptist makes it very clear that we will live genuinely for Christ only if we are willing to die for him. Only the person who is practiced in the art of daily dying will be able to hand themselves over to God in an act of final resignation, as John the Baptist did. Daily dying consists in pouring out one’s energies in the service of the poor, in listening attentively, in praying faithfully, in living harmoniously with others, in seeking reconciliation, in doing penance, in renouncing anything that is an obstacle to following Christ. John the Baptist calls us to prepare the way of the Lord by eliminating from our lives whatever impedes his coming. (Maloney, Seasons in Spirituality, p.48)

Discussion: (*Share thoughts on the readings after a moment of silence*)

How do our actions show that we are doing Jesus’ ministry?”

Closing Prayer:

As our Advent journey continues, we turn in hope to Christ and pray:

-Come, Lord Jesus, and do not delay?

Strengthen all Vincentians in their efforts to reveal your love,

-Come, Lord Jesus, and do not delay. Amen

