



2nd Sunday Advent, Yr C

Lectio Divina

Lectio: Luke is setting the scene for Jesus to begin his public ministry. His first two chapters include: John the Baptist's origins, the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Nativity narratives, the Presentation, Jesus left in Temple. When Jesus at twelve years old was found in the Temple, he tells distraught Joseph and Mary: 'Did you not know that I must be busy with my Father's affairs?' But they did not understand, Lk 2:49-50. It was not yet Jesus' time to be teaching in the Temple.¹ So, Jesus goes with Joseph and Mary to Nazareth and grows into adulthood in their home, Lk 2:51.

After a (hidden) childhood with Joseph and Mary in Nazareth, Jesus has grown in wisdom and age, Lk 2:52. The time was right for Jesus to busy himself with his Father's affairs, his public ministry. Happening simultaneously, John the Baptist's role had been announced at the very start of Luke's Gospel, Lk 1:16-17. From his mother's womb he was filled with the Holy Spirit. And, his role was to call people to repentance and prepare the way for the Lord, the Messiah.

► So, in our text, it is time for John to live out his role that will prepare for Jesus to begin his public ministry, starting thereafter with his baptism by John.

So, time is important for these events. Luke names all the people in positions of authority to tie down the exact date of these events. He wants also to assure his readers that what his Gospel will relate is of a real person, Jesus. His Gospel is not myth or fable!² John the Baptist through the Holy Spirit did live out his role: he did call for repentance, and, he did prepare the way for the Lord the Messiah, who did come, in Jesus!

■ In the context of Advent, our actions must be real: real repentance, real preparation for Christmas, real examples of a people saved. We have limited time; it is time to use it!

Read: Luke 3: 1 - 6

Meditatio: How real a person is Jesus for me? Is Jesus more to me than a great historical figure of ages past? Is the Holy Spirit directing my life? Have I found God in the wilderness or in the bush or in a desert or in a lonely or isolated place? Have there been moments when the word of God has spoken to me (to my heart) and I changed my life or took up a new role? Can I recognize how the Lord has been guiding me into the role(s) I now undertake? What does my Baptism mean for me? How can I use Advent to be a time to review my life? Are there things in my life that I need to change, to repent of and seek forgiveness for? Who are prophets in my world at this time? How do I evaluate prophets? Have I been challenged by people on 'the fringe'? Is Jesus part of my everyday life or do other things push him to the fringe of my life? Are there parts of my life that I 'hide' from Jesus, like being in a deep valley? Have I ever found that following Jesus is a burden to me, like climbing a mountain? Do I go straight to Jesus, or, do I have to be in a certain place or time, quiet and composed etc.? Do I find a closeness to Jesus in my prayer? Can people see in me one who has been set free, been saved e.g. through the peace, meaning and direction in my life? Will I be putting Christ into Christmas?

Oratio: Pray that Jesus' life will inspire and guide us in our lives. Pray for trust in our lives of the Holy Spirit's oversight and empowerment. Pray that we will be witnesses to Jesus. Pray that those entrusted with the responsibility of governing, States and people, may lead with honesty and compassion. Pray in thanks for the gift of Baptism that reconciles us with God. Pray that we will be open to the Holy Spirit's gifts of repentance and forgiveness. Pray, that in our times, we will heed the warnings of the prophets – they are not just for people of ancient times. Pray that we will learn from people surviving on 'the fringe'.³ Pray that we will use the days of Advent in prayerful waiting. Pray that Christmas will celebrate the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Contemplatio – Dwell in stillness, simply aware of the boundless expanse of mercy that surrounds you.

After your prayer – Make time for prayer and reflection in Advent.

✍ Fr Joe

Luke 3: 1 – 6

In the fifteenth year ² of Tiberius Caesar's reign, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of the lands of Ituraea and Trachonitis, Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah, in the wilderness.³ He went through the whole Jordan district proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the sayings of the prophet Isaiah:

A voice cries in the wilderness:³

**Prepare a way for the Lord,
make his path straight.**

**Every valley will be filled in,
every mountain and hill be laid low,
winding ways will be straightened
and rough roads made smooth.**

And all mankind shall see the salvation of God.

Notes:

1 Jesus will be taken to the Temple by the devil to be tempted. He rejects the temptations but it is said that the devil will return at the appointed time, Lk 4:13. ■ The appointed time comes after Jesus has journeyed to the Temple, Lk 9:51 – 19:45. It is then that he teaches in the Temple in the days before the Last Supper, Lk 19:45 – 21:36. ■ In this time he would teach in the Temple, pass the nights on the Mount of Olives, returning to the Temple early in the morning to continue his teaching, consider Lk 21:37-38. ■ No doubt, only some of Jesus' teachings in the Temple, in these days, are recorded in the gospels.

2 The very first verses of Luke's Gospel, Lk 1:1-4 are there to assure Luke's readers that his Gospel texts are from trustworthy sources. ■ In the first verses of our text, Lk 3:1-2, Luke is sort of saying: 'it is not, "Once upon a time" as fables begin, but rather, my Gospel events are set at a precise historical time.' Similarly, myths might begin, "In ages past", Luke's Gospel is not myth.

3 John the Baptist was a man 'surviving on "the fringe".'