

REFLECTION

By **Kevin Ruano**, Franciscan Mission Service DC Service Corps

“Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.” - Luke 3:1-6

Advent
Week Two

Isaiah, whose words the evangelist Luke repeats in this week’s Gospel,

prophesized a beautifully uncanny world. According to the prophet’s vision, no valley would be too deep, no mountain or hill too high, no road too long or path too rough for God’s salvation to reach. When we understand this word, we recognize that the saving presence of God has no limitation. God’s revelation arrives everywhere and to all life wherever it may be. No one life stands below or above another in that radically horizontal and unfamiliar world. God disregards human hierarchies, borders, and definitions.

This season, we celebrate, meditate upon, and commit ourselves to our world’s greatest mystery—God incarnate and among us in Christ. Just like those along the Jordan who were invited by John the Baptist, we are invited to work for the world to which Christ, the salvation of God, arrived. The world in which we recognize God is with us and in each one of us. The world whose mystery we know capable to reveal itself anywhere and at any moment of the day. The world in which each person enters in community without prejudice or judgement but with mutual respect because we know every person to be equally chosen and beloved by God.

Focus: SIMPLE LIVING

When I reflect on what prevents us from treating each other as kin and caring for each other and our common home, indifference appears as our greatest challenge. Today our politicians run campaigns based on hatred, prejudice, and the blatant disrespect of other cultures.

Today so many of us deny scientific facts and disregard how our planet is suffering while we choose to continue to live numb and blind. Preoccupied primarily by our economic wellbeing, we tolerate injustice and accept apathy. Simple living this Advent must mean making space for God and others in our hearts by ridding our lives of the material goods which make us apathetic to and complicit in others’ suffering.

SERVICE SUGGESTION

Opening our hearts to the arrival of God begins with an honest reflection on what in our lives encourages our cultural indifference to the suffering of our planet and its most marginalized peoples. This Advent, think of the moral demands of our faith and analyze whether your life habits or practices adequately demonstrate your commitment to God, all God’s people, and all God’s creation. What will you do to reflect more of the light of Christ today?

PRAYER

Just and compassionate God, whose incarnate word reveals itself to the tender and humble hearted, we pray for healing from the hurtful divisions that human hierarchies, borders, and definitions impose.

Send your Spirit to renew a world divided and suffering. May bigotry shake in the path of Your love and prejudice fade in Your understanding presence.

You, good guardian, know each one of us to be Your chosen and beloved. Bless and protect us as we work for reconciliation, peace, and justice.

