

## **Homily For Sunday Dec 7, 2014**

In the Name of the Father and Of The Son and Of The Holy Spirit.

### **GLORY BE TO JESUS CHRIST! GLORY BE FOREVER!**

We have entered into the second week of the Christmas Lent or Nativity Fast. During this holy season we are on a spiritual journey to the Cave in Bethlehem. The Church asks us during this time of year, to adopt a different mindset than what is around us. She asks us not to be so caught up in the hustle and bustle of preparations for Christmas, that we lose sight of what we are preparing for. She asks us to harness the energy we normally place into the physical preparations for the season, the shopping, the baking, the cleaning, the cooking, and apply it to the spiritual life. Imagine how strong our Church would be if each and everyone of us spent as much time in prayer for the needs of our family and friends as we do buying gifts, wrapping presents and decorating our homes! As I have said many times, the spiritual dimension of life is just as real as the physical realm. The only difference is that it is not as easy to perceive, it is not always visible with our physical eyes.

It is so fitting on this second Sunday of the Advent Season that the Church prescribed for us to read from the Fifth Chapter of St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians. It is such a gift! It reminds us of the power of the Holy Spirit which can be a great strengthening for us. You know, for many people, this time of year is not a very happy one for them. It can be very depressing, because of various life circumstances, one's

health, or loss of close relatives. There is a sense of emptiness that they feel which cannot be filled with having a *Merry Little Christmas* as the song says. This epistle gives us much food for thought, and a road map to shake off these holiday blues!

Allow me to now share with you again, the beauty and power of St Paul's letter.

It begins with St. Paul reminding us that if we are in the spirit of God, we should act that way, and we

be examples of goodness, righteousness, and truth. St Paul continues by telling us to not have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather *expose them*. He continues

*For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light.*

*Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light."*

*See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,*

Last week in my homily I mentioned that this is the perfect time of the year for us to take a spiritual inventory, by making a good confession. It is an opportunity for us to see where we are, and put in place plan with our Spiritual Father's guidance and the help of the Lord to do something about our spiritual condition. The human tendency when we are

in a rut, when we are depressed is to do nothing, but to throw up our hands and feel helpless. St Paul in his epistles reminds us that we need to muster up firm resolve, a desire to feel better and then Wake up, and be strong. And do something about the situation we find ourselves in. We can break bad habits, we can turn away from our old self destructive ways, the bad habits we have, if we really and truly muster up the inner strength to do so. We have to want to feel better, to have a better life. But sometimes we want to wallow in our own self-pity. Now of course this is not easy, for when we are struggling so greatly, it is as if spiritually and even perhaps physically we are bent over like the woman in this Morning's Gospel lesson. Sin, whether our own, or others that we suffer the ill effects of places a huge weight on our shoulders. The good news is that Christ can straighten out our lives and heal us. We just need to draw ourselves close to him so that we can experience his healing touch. We mustn't run away from Him when we are troubled, or get so discouraged that we do not pray, or become angry with Him. On the contrary this is when we need him the most, and we should force ourselves to stand before him in prayer, and humility.

Advent then offers us an opportunity to wake up and be filled with light. It is an easy time of year to find ways to help people who are less fortunate. You and I by this time in our life, ought to know what things will bring us closer to God. We just need to do it, so that the Holy Spirit can come and live within us, and fill us with light. Yes it is a time to

help others, but it also is a time for us to help our selves by recharging our spiritual batteries by spending more time in prayer and in quiet time, being peaceful, and listen to the voice of God, who speaks most beautifully and profoundly in silence.

Let us listen to the wise council of St. Paul and right now, awake from our spiritual sleep. We can do it. We don't do it alone, we do it together as the Body of Christ. It will take some work, but it will definitely be worth it. Christ is the prince of Peace, and that peace and contentment is more precious all the money on earth. This is the gift that ought to be at the top of our Christmas list. Our Lord is offering it freely to you and I. Are we prepared to accept it and open it? Do we really want this peace? If so let us wake up, be sober and be truly focused on Christ who offers us the richness of the Kingdom, both now and in the never ending age.

**Christ is in our Midst! He Is and Ever Shall Be!**