



BENEDICTINE SISTERS OF CHICAGO

First Sunday of Advent
December 1, 2024
Sister Judith Murphy

Jer 33: 14-16
Ps 25: 4-5, 8-9, 10, 14
1Thes 3: 12 to 4: 2
Lk 21: 25-28, 34-36

Today, the first Sunday of Advent, reminds us that always we begin again. Today—listen for God’s voice. If today you hear God’s voice, harden not your hearts. New beginnings, prophecy, conversion, God’s work in us—I saw all of these in our readings today. I found reflections on these in Rabbi Heschel and in Frederick Buechner.

The Darkness outside these mornings can remind us to take note this Advent of empty space and times offered to us—that our souls need so badly, emptiness from which things can be born anew in us; Silence, Patience deep listening. New beginning, conversion.

We’re reminded today also of prophecy: the line of Hebrew prophets hear the voice of the same God that spoke to Abraham. Each of the prophets reminds that still our God has vision for us, shaping us to be the people of God. Jeremiah’s call is to suspend our indifference to what our God is doing in us. We are like living clay in the hands of our loving Creator. As a potter working with living clay, we are called to deep listening in our experiences of the changes that we face and in our responses to them.

Our loving Creator God continues to create and shape us in these daily experiences and responses.

Paul calls the Thessalonians and us today to strengthen the bonds of love –for conversion in relation to one another –in community, in the faith community, in the civic and human community. To be there for one another as God shapes us as a people for our world.

And in Luke’s gospel today we see and hear Jesus preparing his followers for the end times. Jesus encourages them and us to take care that we don’t become discouraged and tired from the anxieties of life. This passage comes just before the Paschal meal in Luke.

Good timing for us as we gather once again around this Eucharistic table. We pray for God’s loving support in our spiritual space... for revelation of God’s work to be made manifest in us and in our world at this time.

Recently in our Give Us this Day prayer aid there was a story of Cardinal Bernadin having gone through a time of conversion himself. He came to understand that he was indeed a man of the Church... and he was called to become a person of Christ. We may be called similarly these days – to go deeper. We pray as we gather around this table that we can become Eucharist for our world. And savor the quiet time of Advent preparing us too for the quiet time of Christmas.