



THE COMING OF JESUS IN OUR MIDST

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into him and eat with him, and he with me. Revelation 3:20

WHEN EARLY CHRISTIANITY spoke of the return of the Lord Jesus, they thought of a great day of judgment. Even though this thought may appear to us to be so unlike Christmas, it is original Christianity and to be taken extremely seriously. When we hear Jesus knocking, our conscience first of all pricks us: Are we rightly prepared? Is our heart capable of becoming God's dwelling place? Thus, Advent becomes a time of self-examination. "Put the desires of your heart in order, O human beings!" (Valentin Thilo), as the old song sings. It is very remarkable that we face the thought that God is coming so calmly, whereas previously peoples trembled at the day of God, whereas the world fell into trembling when Jesus Christ walked over the earth. That is why we find it so strange when we see the marks of God in the world so often together with the marks of human suffering, with the marks of the cross on Golgotha. We have become so accustomed to the idea of divine love and of God's coming at Christmas that we no longer feel the shiver of fear that God's coming should arouse in us. We are indifferent to the message, taking only the pleasant and agreeable out of it and forgetting the serious aspect, that the God of the world draws near to the people of our little earth and lays claim to us. The coming of God is truly not only glad tidings, but first of all frightening news for everyone who has a conscience.

Only when we have felt the terror of the matter, can we recognize the incomparable kindness. God comes into the very midst of evil and of death and judges the evil in us and in the world. And by judging us, God cleanses and sanctifies us, comes to us with grace and love. God makes us happy as only children can be happy. God wants to always be with us, wherever we may be – in our sin, in our suffering and death. We are no longer alone; God is with us. We are no longer homeless; a bit of the eternal home itself has moved unto us. Therefore, we adults can rejoice deeply within our hearts under the Christmas tree, perhaps much more than the children are able. We know that God's goodness will once again draw near. We think of all of God's goodness that came our way last year and sense something of this marvellous home. Jesus comes in judgment and grace: "Behold I stand at the door...Open wide the gates!" (Ps. 24:7)

One day, at the last judgment, he will separate the sheep and the goats and will say to those on his right: "Come, you blessed...I was hungry, and you fed me..." (Matt. 25:34). To the astonished question of when and where, he answered: "What you did to the least of these, you have done to me..." (Matt. 25:40). With that we are faced with the shocking reality: Jesus stands at the door and knocks, in complete reality. He asks you for help in the form of a beggar, in the form of a ruined human being in torn clothing. He confronts you in every person that you meet. Christ walks on the earth as your neighbour as long as there are people. He walks on the earth as the one through whom God calls you, speaks to you and makes his demands. That is the greatest seriousness and the greatest blessedness of the Advent message. Christ stands at the door. He lives in the form of the person in our midst. Will you keep the door locked or open it to him?

Christ is still knocking. It is not yet Christmas. But it is also not the great final Advent, the final coming of Christ. Through all the Advents of our life that we celebrate goes the longing for the final Advent, where it says: "Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 21:5). Advent is a time of waiting. Our whole life, however, is Advent – that is, a time of waiting for the ultimate, for the time when there will be a new heaven and a new earth, when all people are brothers and sisters and one rejoices in the words of the angels: "On earth peace to those on whom God's favour rests." Learn to wait, because he has promised to come. "I stand at the door..." We however call to him: "Yes, come soon, Lord Jesus!" Amen.

St Mary's
Parish

Serving
the
Community

Serving
the
Family

Serving
the
City

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Child Protection: <http://www.stmaryshaddingtonroad.ie/ministries/child-protection/> also www.csp.dublindiocese.ie

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ANNUAL COLLECTION TODAY

Please give generously in support of this
parish-based work
THANK YOU

Advent Adoration

Saturday after the Vigil Mass

7, 14, 21 December:

7:00pm to 8:00pm

A quiet moment before the Lord

Take a minute, light a candle, say a prayer...

The Guest House

This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.
A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.
Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they are a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still, treat each guest honourably.
He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.
The dark thought, the shame, the malice.
meet them at the door laughing and invite them in.
Be grateful for whatever comes.
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.

— Jellaludin Rumi (1203-1273), Sufi poet
translation by Coleman Barks

Sign

I don't need a spinning sun
Moving statue
Or parting sea:
Lord, a strawberry is
Enough for me
— Kevin Whelan.

The poet and road-sweeper, Kevin Whelan lives in Moycul-
len, Co Galway. This appeared as The Tablet poem this
week.

Christmas By Candlelight



Sunday 22nd December, 7.30pm

Mulled Wine and Mince Pies

in the

Community Room

Tickets available after mass on

14/15 and 21/22 December

Get in the Spirit of the Season

Bring the Family

IN MEMORIAM

Masses on 14th/15th December 2019

6pm: Annie Curran (Anniversary)

9.30am: Paul P Hogan (Months Mind)

11am: Pat French (Anniversary)

Masses and Confession

Sundays: Vigil, 6pm (Saturday), 9.30am, 11am, 5pm

Croatian Community Mass 6.30pm

Messe en français 12.30 (2^e et 4^e dimanche du mois)

Daily masses 10am and 12.40pm, Saturday 10am only

-Rosary daily after 10am mass

Adoration Blessed Sacrament, Weds 10.30-12.40

LAST WEEK'S COLLECTIONS

1st Collection: €1,155

Share Collection: €790

Weekday collections: €460

THANK YOU