

Commentary on the Gospel for Sat, Jan 3rd 2015

The hype of Christmas and New Year's has waned, and we are slowly adjusting back to our daily routines. We are once again inundated by work, email, homework, chores, errands - you name it!

Although the Western focus of Christmas, which is centered around consumerism, is over, the Christmas/Advent season is not. We are often wrapped-up in the materialistic nature of the holiday, rather than celebrating the true meaning behind the special season, which is evident here in today's readings.

In today's Gospel reading, we hear of John the Baptist's witness to Jesus Christ. Through John's witness, we learn the truth and complexity of Jesus. He is the sacrificial lamb; He is greater than any man, because he existed before all men; As a man, He was filled and sanctioned by the Holy Spirit; As Son of God, He is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. We must understand Jesus in his fullness before we as disciples can go forth and proclaim to the world who Jesus is and what He came to do.

In knowing Him more fully, we are able to understand ourselves more fully. Let us examine ourselves truthfully. What are we called to do on this earth? How will we proclaim the Word of God? What are our fears and anxieties? What are our hopes and dreams? What are our strengths and weaknesses?

During this new calendar year I encourage us all to look internally to encounter our purpose on this earth.

Moreover, we need to exhibit faith, as John the Baptist did when he saw the Spirit come down from the sky and remain upon Jesus. Although John did not know Him, he had faith that He was the Son of God. Have faith in both God and the Son he bestowed upon us. Seek God in all things, big or small.

Not only should we come to know ourselves more fully by looking within, we must also look externally.

As we begin our day, let us take a moment to reflect on today's readings. Let God give us the desire to understand his presence in our lives more deeply. Let us not waiver in our faith, and let us express our faith to our brothers and sisters.

Andy Gleason - Creighton's Institute for Latin American Concern