

December 9-10, 2017
Second Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 40:1-11

Second Peter 3:8-14

Mark 1:1-8

Whom can we trust?

With assorted tawdry and criminal actions toppling politicians, religious leaders and supposed media 'untouchables', it feels as if we must go it alone when it comes to charting our courses within life. Our social media saturated environment combined with adulation of 'fake leaders' has resulted in compounded disappointments in those whom we have mistakenly tried to follow on paths to success, contentment and happiness. How apt that these confusions are occurring within the season of ADVENT....last week we were reminded to WATCH for the grace/presence of God and on this second preparatory week we hear the familiar refrain from Isaiah, 'I am sending my messenger before me...prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.' History has hopefully taught us that the confusions and disappointments of our present era are not unfamiliar, sowing the seeds for fresh renewal, 'cleansing', clarity and embracing of new goals and fresh directions. Anticipating the arrival of December 25th, the infant of Bethlehem represents the constant renewal offered us by God to 'right ourselves', shake off our disappointments and refocus on what is essential. Eventually the Child of Christmas will speak of the CROSS, by which our lives are continually chiseled. For these weeks we are invited to simply breathe deeply of the fresh HOPE being offered; 'Prepare the way of the Lord....one mightier than I is coming after me...' The urgings of John the Baptist are our way forward through this year's swamp of disappointments and disillusionments.... but the Incarnation is still occurring each and every day....Jesus is still with us.

Thank you for joining with our Santa Clara community as we ADVENT together in prayer, worship and community. Thank you for your generosity of last weekend on behalf of the FIRE VICTIMS in Santa Rosa; **this weekend we have the ANNUAL Special Collection to benefit the Retired Religious of the United States as well as the Retired Clergy of the Diocese of Orange.** Over the years your enthusiastic outreach for those who have spent their lives in service to their assorted religious communities has provided relief, comfort and medical care for our elder mentors of faith. Please note that **this Wednesday is our 'Night of Story & Song' at 6:30pm,** a relaxed evening of a Christmas Story read by Seminarian Michael interspersed with Christmas carols, accompanied by hot cocoa, wassail and Christmas cookies...and it is FREE! Please take a Bulletin with you for more information about **next weekend's Rectory Open House** and other pre-Christmas events. Please note as well the **special schedule for December 24th**....Fourth Sunday of Advent at 8am & 10am...**NO 12 noon Mass....**Christmas Eve Vigil Masses at 4pm, 6:30pm & 9pm followed by ONE Mass on Christmas Day (Monday) at 10am. Busy, busy, busy...but in the midst of all your Christmas preparations please remember, you are loved. FKB