

December 8-9, 2018
Second Sunday of Advent
Baruch 5:1-9 Philippians 1:4-11 Luke 3:1-6

With the contemporary weaving together of cinema and music, many of us have an automatic recognition and response to certain 'theme' pieces of music. The sound track for 'Star Wars', the foreboding sound from the 'Jaws' prequel with the upward look at a swimmer in the water, the 'House of Cards' melody, all of these, and so many more, automatically conjure images, themes, plots and stories to mind. The same is true of this week's Scripture selections which speak of hope, joy and John the Baptist as the precursor to Jesus. Granted, John the Baptist is announcing the presence of the ADULT Jesus, but it serves our purposes as we draw near to Christmas; in order to have an ADULT Jesus, he necessarily had to be born. As these December days become filled with assorted celebrations, commemorations and festivities, the urgings of the prophets of old are still relevant...to not get so caught up in the secular celebrations that the arrival of Christmas Day finds us empty and anxious for the holidays to be over. Granted, our festivities have their place and purpose, particularly given all the losses from fires, deaths from mass shootings, disappointments from clergy sexual crimes and betrayals and the apparent rise and toleration of right-wing hate groups, is it any wonder that many of us crave the images, sounds, tastes and moods of Christmas'-past? Still, lest we run the risk of emptying the sacred of its power, the words of John the Baptist are especially true for us in 2018... 'Prepare the way of the Lord...', for it is for him we decorate our homes, purchase our gifts, celebrate and sing carols of good cheer. Without Jesus, they make no sense...with Jesus, they lift our spirits and kindle our hopes.

Thank you for sharing this Second Weekend of Advent with our Santa Clara community. This coming week brings some FESTIVE and restful opportunities by which to enjoy the season: #1. On Thursday, December 13th at 7pm is our **Night of Story and Song....**a FREE opportunity to pause from all the busy-ness of the season and relax as Seminarian Cheeyoon shares a Christmas Story accompanied by the singing of Christmas Carols with the help of our Music Ministry...along with ample Christmas cookies, Hot Cocoa and Wassail (mulled cider)...and again, it is FREE; #2. On next Sunday, December 16th from 2pm-5pm is the annual **Rectory Christmas Open House.** Please come by for a bit, enjoy the holiday decorations, the live carolers, some treats from the Rectory Kitchen and of course the EGGNOG. **5475 Bayberry** is the address, please do not block any driveways of our neighbors. Next weekend we will also be accepting a Second Special Collection on behalf of the Retired Religious of the United States...as well as the Retired Clergy of the Diocese of Orange, thank you for whatever generosity you are able to share to support our Religious Sisters/Nuns and Priests who are now in their elder years and facing unexpected medical/retirement needs. As Advent continues to BLOSSOM, please remember, you are loved. FKB