



Diocese of Corner Brook and Labrador

November 27th, 2022

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

As we, "Prepare the way of the Lord", let us join hand in hand with all those who awaited him, from Adam and Eve, who's sin necessitated a Saviour, to the Prophets, who announced his coming a world laid low by sin and death. Let us listen to John the Baptist, as he called the people of Israel to repentance, to Mary who opened her heart to receive God's Word made Flesh, and to Joseph who, confused by Mary's unexpected pregnancy, nonetheless offered him his fatherly love.

Let us be attentive to the words of the Advent Readings, rejoicing in the faith and hope they express. May our actions give flesh to their words, as we bind the wounds of all who are in distress and bring Christ's light to all who dwell in darkness. Let us join together with John the Baptist in announcing the One who has come, knowing that, "he must increase and I must decrease". Let us heed Mary's "Let it done to me according to your word", not holding back in what we are willing to offer God. And let us praise and thank him with the shepherds, and, with the Magi, lay our true treasures at his feet.

Advent is marked by our willingness to encounter and make room for Christ in our lives. Though the shelter we offer may be as crude as the manger where he once lay, may our love and devotion make up for what may still be lacking in the shelter we provide.

Join with me in encountering Christ under the humble appearance of the Sacraments, seeking his forgiveness and receiving him in his Once-and-for-all self-offering made present in the Eucharist. Christ was not shy in humbling himself, even to the point of dying on a cross. Let us humble ourselves, in turn, so that we may more truly, "Die to self and so to live our life to him" by serving him in our neighbour.

May our Advent journey be a fruitful one. May it bring us closer to him and more in tune to one another.

Fraternally in Christ,

Bishop Bart van Roijen

Bishop of the diocese of Corner Brook and Labrador

