

Fourth Week of Advent

I will bless the person who puts his trust in me. He is like a tree growing near a stream and sending out roots to the water. It is not afraid when hot weather comes, because its leaves stay green; it has no worries when there is no rain; it keeps on bearing fruit.

(Jeremiah 17:7-8)



Advent is a time to sink our spiritual roots deeply, to let them stretch out to God, the source of all life. When we are deeply connected to God, we too can be sources of life to others by the way we live our daily life. Christmas is not only the season of receiving gifts; it is also the season of taking delight in giving to others. When we give, we emulate what God has done for us, and in that we find our deepest joy. Let us prepare to be generous in offering our family, coworkers, and neighbors spiritual gifts such as patience, prudence, encouragement, counsel, faith, hope, and love.

It has been said, "You can't give what you haven't got." The gift offered during this last week of Advent is the gift of hope. Let us drink deeply of the spiritual gift of hope that God offers us. If we do, we can cherish the spirit of Christmas within us and bring the blessings of the Christ Child to others every day of the year.

Hope Helps Us Endure in Difficult Times



We can easily become impatient with God and with one another. Living in hope means being willing to live courageously day to day. The signs of change in us will most likely be subtle. Living in hope means that while Jesus has already come, we are still in the process of letting him complete the journey into our hearts.

Give yourself time this week to bathe your heart in the waters of God's life-giving strength and healing love. Feed your heart with God's Word and water your soul with the grace of God by the reception of Reconciliation and Eucharist.