

Rectoría de San Juan de Dios
I Sunday of Advent-Cycle B
Is 63, 16-17.19; 64, 2-7; Ps 80; 1 Cor 1, 3-9; Mk 13, 33-37
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Let Us Guard Faithfulness

In the hours of the night when we are most vulnerable, the hours of doubting our faith and action, of crises and lack of clarity, we could stop being faithful to God and our brothers and sisters.

The parable of Jesus which refers to a man who goes on a journey and gives an assignment to each of his servants, especially to the gatekeeper, can reorder our attitude toward our current and future life.

On a daily basis, we understand in faith that each day of our existence we sense a transcendent vision and thus the awareness of living a time of preparation and hope as we make our way to God.

To guard the relationship that we have with God and to take care of our faithfulness to Him is important in our preparation for Advent, especially when we live in a world accustomed to unfaithfulness, to living without direction and without commitments.

We want to guard our faithfulness, to be like that gatekeeper whose life and work make sense only in relation to his master who could arrive at any hour of the night, at the least expected or obvious time.

To live the experience of guarding our faith:

1-Let us ask the Father.

If we review our life, we see a little of ourselves reflected in the community of Isaiah, in the first reading; we go along with our own plan, without direction or even order, farther and farther from God. When put in this way, it is surprising to realize that we have been walking along much of the time in a solitary way and that, at a certain point, we don't know where to continue.

This is the petition to God: *Return for the sake of your servants...shake the mountains with your presence.*

A people who feels lost and alone, who experiences God as far away and angry because no one invokes His name, makes a loving cry to God, from the awareness of being far from Him, but with the expectation that it is up to Him to come to meet them. For that reason, we dare to say as did the people in Isaiah: *we are the work of your hands.* In the mutual cry of our love of God, these words are very strong; they are a key argument, as if we said to God, "Who is most able to understand us or do anything for us but You, who have created us and who loves us with the love of a Father?"

I think that it is well for us to be daring: we ask our Father who comes out to meet us to help us to maintain our fidelity. How far have I distanced myself or continued life without taking into account my relationship with God?

2- Let us make use of the divine gifts.

If we have discovered the gifts that God has given us, we realize that the fruit of His gifts is peace. We could look into our memory right now and discover our divine gifts. The community that Paul addresses today had received especially the gifts of the word and knowledge. If only in our

own day, each person's gifts would be clear to him! It is important because it is from these gifts that each person can be doing whatever has been entrusted to him by the Lord.

We only have this opportunity to exercise our gifts in our life and in our interaction with others who share our life.

Can we remember if we have done God's will with the gifts He has given us? Our fidelity to God is guarded through the gifts, for we are not absolute owners of them. We have received them for the purpose of service and love to others; then, when the Lord returns, He will want to know if we have done our part.

3-Let us be the gate

The believing community corresponds to the gatekeeper in the parable of Jesus. It is up to the community to open the gate to the pagans and to make the attitude of Jesus to persecution and death its own. In this sense, it would not apply to each person in a personal way but, as the community that we make together, it is proper to apply to ourselves the personal title: to be the gate or the gatekeeper.

In practice, each one of us, with our responsible attitude, makes the community possible. Doing what we are given to do—that is the joy of the Lord. We carry the communal responsibility to make love and service to others possible.

Beginning our Advent path, let us be hopeful and guard our faithfulness in the hours when our life is not clear, when sleepiness puts our fidelity to God at risk, so that when He comes at Christmas, we will have peace and tranquility at our meeting with our Lord.