

3 Advent B 12-11-11

“Who are you?” “Well, my name is...” No, not your name: who are you? “I am a nurse...I’m a consultant...I am retired...I am a student... I am a truck driver...I am disabled...I am an engineer ...I am a sales rep...I am a cashier...I am a teacher.”

Yes, but who are you? “I’m a wife...I’m a dad...I am a widow ...I’m a grandpaI’m a teen...I’m a daughter...I am single.”

Yes, but who are you? “Well, I’m an American...I’m a veteran ...I am a taxpayer...I’m a liberal...I’m very patriotic...”

Who else are you? “OK, I’m a Catholic...I am a Christian...I am a contemplative...I am a sinner...I am a child of God.”

And who else are you? “I am a sports fan....I am a musician... I am a gardener...I am a volunteer...I am a cook...I am a soccer player...I am a friend.”

Anything else you have to say for yourself? “I am a leader...I am quiet...I am a good student...I am lonely...I am young...I am optimistic...I have no idea who I am!”

It seems good to know who we are....and who we are not. To live our own life. To know our place in the world...To know that we are doing what God wants of us.

John the Baptist knew he was not the Messiah, which is easy to forget. John said, “I am a voice, crying out.” John the Baptist was, in some ways, a failure: his disciples left him for Jesus. His head ended on a platter because of a drunken orgy. No matter. We are not called to be successful. Our job is to be faithful.

The Prophet Isaiah wrote, "The Lord God has anointed me; he has sent me to proclaim, to announce." 2600 years later, people still read Isaiah's messages.

Our task is likely to be less public, more humble. Mother Theresa often said, "Do what you can, do it now, and do it well." We are not called to DO everything, or Be everything, but we can all do something. Each of us has something to give to God. Somebody, for example, made the sandals that Jesus wore.

Christmas is just two weeks away. There is already Someone among us whom we do not recognize. He is not just a cute baby in a manger. He is the Messiah, He is Lord, He is God among us. Our job is to try do to His will, and only His will in our particular life.

I mentioned Mother Theresa. Did you know that she had a business card? Perhaps it will help us prepare for a meaningful Christmas: *The fruit of silence is prayer. The fruit of prayer is faith. The fruit of faith is love. The fruit of love is service. And the fruit of service is peace.*