

2nd Sunday Advent

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12-5-10

Well, we enjoyed "Breakfast with Santa" this morning. So of course I climbed onto Santa's lap, and he said, "And what would you like from Santa this year?" "I want a really good homily for the Second Sunday of Advent!" Santa replied, "Tough. You've been much too naughty! Next!" So here goes.

We could begin by stepping into the warm Jordan River, in line to be baptized by John. It would be like going to confession: we are about to acknowledge our sins to John, look him in the eye, promise to bear good fruit, and get dunked in the river water.

Why do we hear about John three weeks before the birth of baby Jesus? Because in Christian thinking, Christmas is not simply about the birth of baby Jesus. It's really not just for children! Christmas is about the entire Christ event: God comes to us in Jesus, teaches, forgives, heals us, gives us the Eucharist, saves us by his death on the Cross, sends the Holy Spirit, and is with us in the Church.

So when someone asks, "Are you ready for Christmas?" We could respond, "Not quite. I'm still thinking a lot about Jesus and what he means to me. And I feel a need to go to Confession. And I plan to send a nice Christmas card to my brother I haven't seen in two years. Then I'll be ready!" (They will look at you very weird. And they will never ask that question again.)

Two weeks ago, I acknowledged my sins—I went to Confession—to a priest on a river. Actually, it wasn't the Jordan River; it was the Licking River, where he lives.

What an unusual way to prepare for Christmas: to repent! Be the change you are looking for! Be the change you are hoping for!