

Third Wednesday of Advent, December 15

ACT JUSTLY, LOVE TENDERLY,

WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD

MICAH

These words by the Prophet Micah from the Old Testament have inspired and challenged me throughout my life. As a student when I first heard these words, then as a teacher, minister, husband, father, grandfather and friend. The challenge is simple yet so profound.

During this Season of Advent, preparing once again for Christmas, I look to Joseph, the earthly father of Jesus, who inspires me as he lived out these words. As he contemplated and struggled with the reality of marrying a Virgin with Child, he 'acted justly' by listening to God's call to embrace Mary, the Child and an uncertain future.

As they searched for a place for their Child to be born his tender love for his wife and child led them to Bethlehem, a city unknown, to trust God on this part of their journey. Though we have no actual account, I do believe that as we see in every image of this birth that Mary is holding her child, I do believe that Joseph also, each day, 'tenderly cradled and loved' this child as his own.

In their daily life, I do believe Jesus, both God and Man, learned so much of his human love, compassion and kindness being with Joseph as with Mary as the Holy Family 'they walked humbly each day with their God.'

As we prepare to celebrate His coming, let us act justly, love tenderly and, as Joseph did, hold the Child close to our hearts on our journey through life.

Dear St Joseph, guide us to Him.

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