

Second Sunday of Advent, December 5

Isaiah 11:1-10; Rom 15:4-9; Mt 3:1-12

Isaiah prophesized that a shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse. He does not envision this birth from a seed, nor from a tree; instead, a stump. The vision is one of death from what was once living. Some scholars believe that Isaiah is not so much referring to the future. Instead, he is referring to the Assyrian destruction of Israel, and the possible conquest of the southern kingdom of Judah. As all seems lost, Isaiah reassures Judah, including Jerusalem, will survive. To what seems dead, there is life.

Currently, naysayers of doom bombard us. Nations vie for ultimate power. The few overrule the many. Human freedoms are threatened by political powers. Climate change threatens homelands and living. There are more displaced humans in the world than ever before: 281 million. It would seem that the tree of life could be a stump of humanity. Trust in such proclaimers would invite us to prepare for the end, and give up on life.

Isaiah's proclamation counters the fatalists! Trust in God that there is life from whence most see death. Yes, as stewards of God, we are responsible to make this earth more like the Kingdom. Our actions, decisions, and attitudes must stem from our discipleship.

Most of all, we must believe that God will provide a message of life. This Advent let us recommit ourselves to trust in God's power, just as Judah was called to do so. This is a season of revealing! Let us be in awe of God's revelation of love to us, each day!

Signed Anonymous