



Daily Reflections

December 10, 2017

Scripture

Mark 1: 1-8

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God.

As it is written in Isaiah the prophet:

Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you;
he will prepare your way.

A voice of one crying out in the desert:

"Prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight his paths."

John the Baptist appeared in the desert
proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

People of the whole Judean countryside
and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem
were going out to him

and were being baptized by him in the Jordan River
as they acknowledged their sins.

John was clothed in camel's hair,
with a leather belt around his waist.

He fed on locusts and wild honey.

And this is what he proclaimed:

"One mightier than I is coming after me.

I am not worthy to stoop and loosen the thongs of his sandals.

I have baptized you with water;

he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Our Scripture Reflection

In today's Gospel, we receive the fundamental message of the season of Advent, "Prepare the way of the Lord." And how do we do that? We begin by asking for the Lord's light to illumine in our lives those places where we have put up roadblocks in the path of the Lord as He attempts to enter the depths of our hearts. What are those roadblocks? Envy, hatred, jealousy, anger, and most especially, our lack of humility. How do we begin such a seemingly difficult task? Do something that is the opposite of a particular vice. For instance, if you are envious of someone, compliment them and pray for them instead. Please remember, with God's Grace we can do all things.

Food for your Journey

When we went to Romania a few weeks ago and visited the old basilica up on the hill in Criseni, we found that the doorway into the sanctuary is only about four and a half feet high, which means you have to bow down in order to get in. Father Florin, the Romanian Orthodox priest who was hosting, explained that that was the point. The door was intentionally built that low so that you would have to humble yourself before coming inside to commune with Christ. It is the only way you can enter Christ mass, i.e, Christmas. There is no other way to Christmas.

"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near," John told his listeners.

—Mary Graves

Dear Jesus, Pour forth Your amazing Grace upon me so that I can do my Advent work of preparing a place to receive You with Joy when Christmas comes. Amen.