

Daily Reflections

ADVENT

The Divine Intervention

December 15, 2016

Scripture

Luke 7:24-30

When the messengers of John the Baptist had left, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John.

“What did you go out to the desert to see B a reed swayed by the wind? Then what did you go out to see?

Someone dressed in fine garments?

Those who dress luxuriously and live sumptuously are found in royal palaces.

Then what did you go out to see?

A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.

This is the one about whom Scripture says:

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

I tell you,

among those born of women, no one is greater than John; yet the least in the Kingdom of God is greater than he.”

(All the people who listened, including the tax collectors, who were baptized with the baptism of John,

acknowledged the righteousness of God;
but the Pharisees and scholars of the law,
who were not baptized by him,
rejected the plan of God for themselves.)

Our Scripture Reflection

Most people are under the assumption that a prophet is some sort of a wild eyed future teller. And lets' face it, walking around in a camel hair shirt and eating bugs certainly is unusual, to say the least. But John was a true prophet. And what is the role of the prophet? To call the present generation that has gone astray back to the way of God before judgment occurs. They were and are hard lined "conservatives." Both John and Jesus served the role of prophet. May we hear their voices calling us to "turn back" and do so immediately.

Food for your Journey

When I was young, I longed to be a saint. What was I longing for? I think it was for certainty that my life had been, in the most profound sense, a "success" -- that great and glorious success that is sanctity. We revere the saints. We imitate them. Theirs is the true and lasting glory. Very clearly, this desire is, unconsciously, as worldly as that of the writer who wants to write a masterpiece or the politician who yearns to be prime minister or president. None of these ambitions has the least to do with what Jesus preached -- that lowliness, that love for last place, that readiness to die and be forgotten To be concerned with oneself in any way, to watch one's growth in "holiness" or "prayer," to be spiritually ambitious, all this Jesus earnestly sets his face against.

--Sr. Wendy Beckett (author of the BBC art-appreciation series, *Sister Wendy's Odyssey* and *Sister Wendy's Grand Tour*) in *The Mystery of Love: Saints in Art through the Centuries* (HarperOne, 1996).

Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, Help me to courageously make a straight path in my life so that I can receive You with joy when You come. Amen.

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