

3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR B 2020

WITNESSING

As in an African setting, John put himself in the right place at the right time to meet the people. A good number of people would have been in that River as they came to draw and fetch water at different times of the day. I would imagine that the figure of a stranger with unattended, uncombed, shaggy hair, dirty camel hide strapped on his waist portrayed a real man from the desert. He must have attracted so many people, not only the children and women who had come to fetch water, but also other characters, like scholars walking around the Banks of the River Jordan. They couldn't wait to ask the stranger, **"Who are you? Are you Elijah, Moses, one of the prophets, The Christ?"** The stranger was neither of these, though he had the qualification of each of them. Still they persisted, **"WHO ARE YOU?"** He declared himself, and who he was: **"A WITNESS TO THE LIGHT."**

He was not the light himself. When the proper light came he stepped aside that the Real light might SHINE. John had a central role to play in the coming of the Savior. He was to prepare the way, he was to be a witness to the light, and he fulfilled this role fully and without fear. He was courageous to the extent of giving up his life. Don't we have the same role as John the Baptist, to witness Christ in this volatile, challenging world and in our society?

-Is He not among us in this world today?

-Is He not among us in the Eucharist during every mass?

-Is He not among us in the scripture readings?

-Is He not among us in this gathered community?

-Is He not among the suffering, the poor, and the maligned?

ARE WE RECOGNIZING HIM AS ONE STANDING AMONG US NOT KNOWN TO US?

Might we have closed our eyes, ears, and our feelings to those who are in need?

Are we not called to be like John, that voice of the voiceless in our society today?

What is going to be our role this Christmas as witnesses of Christ in this world today especially among those who have no food and shelter? We cannot be a witness to the light if we are in darkness; we need to shine first by our own deeds and actions. Let us reflect the face of Christ, which has been so blurred in our society, that it might shine without fading. He will continue to stand among us without recognizing him. Our hearts will remain broken. The good news will not be preached to the poor. The captive will not be freed. We must then be serious witnesses and be without fear like the Baptist. The task is for all of us to recognize Him among us and let Him shine through our actions. He lived in the world for 30

years as a poor son of a carpenter and many never recognized or accepted him. He was in the world and the world never knew Him (Jn.1:11). John too, never recognized him until the Holy Spirit came upon Him (Jn.1:31-32). Having recognized him he took the responsibility to point him out to others. Are we not supposed to do the same to others today? **This is witnessing.**

The Jews never recognized Him because of the kind of messiah they expected. They expected a **political, Nationalistic, warlike leader.** Christ presented Himself to be.

-A Shephard and Physician.

-Humble, Gentle and Caring.

-Anointed by the Holy Spirit.

-Sent to bring good news to the poor.

-Biding up the broken hearts.

-Proclaiming freedom and liberty to the captives.

-Releasing those who are emotionally and psychologically imprisoned.

Then above all, to proclaim the year of the Lord. Through this, he tried to bring **blessing, pardon, healing, and liberation to all.** We are all invited during this Sunday of Joy to be witnesses of Christ, thus accomplishing His Mission as we await Emmanuel,

GOD WITH US.