

## Advent - The Time Has Come.

On the outside Stonework of Autun Cathedral in Burgundy there is a sculpture displaying three kings all together in one bed and above them is an angel pointing to a star hovering above them. One is awakened and gazes at it, one only opens one eye, the other carries on asleep, both eyes closed.

This always reminded me and still challenges me to reflect at this time of Waiting:

- How alert am to the Jesus who came to a stable in Bethlehem?
- The Jesus who is still coming?
- Who is ever coming?
- How prepared am I?
- At what stage of expectancy am I?
- At what stage in the Spiritual Life am I?
- What will I do about it this Advent?

In Advent we wait in expectancy, we wait, we remember, and we also look forward. We remember how Israel awaited the promises of the Covenants and the prophets. We remember Jesus coming, his birth, the fulfilment of the promise, and the promise of the resurrection, and we look forward expectantly in the present, in finding Jesus and the Spirit in all we do and see around us- looking forward expectantly in faith, to the promise given to all of us, the final coming of the Kingdom. We wait in hope for the ongoing grace to feed our seed of Faith into ongoing growth and fruition, on and in our Faith Journey, alone and together.

Advent calls us to become who we are, to discover the journey of Christ was to make and to walk with him, to become self-actualised in God, not in myself. It calls us to find the freedom Mary and Jesus had, to be able to say a continuous "Yes", to God, even when struggling, all their eyes open, aware of what was happening, but continually pondering, never having an answer of certainty, but walking a faithful journey, keeping eyes on God's promise. This is the journey of Advent.

We wait in expectation to be claimed fully and finally as sons and daughters of God, to meet with all those who have gone before us, family, friends, saints, holding us on their shoulders, walking with us and showing us the way. I cannot say I know God when I don't truly know myself, to say I do is presumption. To say I know myself without knowing who God is for me, and the gift of unconditional love He gifts me with, can lead to isolation and despair.

Advent gives me space, to rejoice, to wait, to expect, to give new birth to myself, to Christ again in me, to remember all I have received, and to re-member myself into the family of God who are walking this journey with me.

All of us are on a journey, seeking expectant, longing. All of us need a star, a guide. Do I have one? Who do I share my faith with? Who keeps me on track, steering me to face the direction I am called to take? Could that be an extra gift for me under the tree this year?

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