New Machine

Patty Watches, x-ray technical at St. James Mercy Hospital, Hornell, is shown placing an x-ray in the new machine received at the hospital recently. The equipment makes copies of x-rays, and performs other functions to aid in reading an x-ray. The machine, costing $1,065, was purchased for the hospital by the St. James Women's Board.

Insights In Liturgy

LITURGY
By Father Robert J. Kennedy

Praying Advent

"The season of Advent has a twofold character. It is a time of preparation for Christmas when the first coming of God's Son to our world is recalled. It is also a season when minds are directed by this memorial to Christ's second coming at the end of time. It is thus a season of joyful and spiritual expectation." (General Norms for the Liturgical Year, 39)

This twofold character unfolds primarily in the rich selection of Advent scripture readings, but it is also to be found in the various prayers and blessings that are prayed at the Advent Eucharists. These prayers look with hope toward the God who comes to save us, they also express the faith and need of an Advent People who "believe that the Son of God once came to us ... and look for him to come again" (Blessing for Advent)

Who is the God of Advent that we acknowledge in our prayer this season?

He is the "all powerful God," the "Father in heaven," who warms our hearts with his love and lights up our searching minds with his Word (Week I). He is the "God of power and mercy" who "will make radiant the night of our waiting world" by the glory of his Son (Week II). This God is the "Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" who is ever faithful to his promises and ever close to his Church: his presence will bestow the gifts of joy and hope (Week III). The God of Advent is the "eternal Word (which) took flesh on our earth when the Virgin Mary placed her life at the service of (his) plan" (Week IV).

The God of Advent does not use the power he has to destroy: it is rather the power of mercy. As our days get colder and darker, God's power warms us with love, lights our way with the Word of his truth, and makes our gloomy world radiant. He fulfills his promises and inspires us with hope and joy. His desire to be close to us is so strong that he took our flesh.

It is a wonderful God we worship and pray to in this season! And an Advent People wait with joyful and spiritual expectation for the coming of this God in glory when he will bring his promises to fulfillment. "The earth rejoices in hope of the Savior's coming and looks forward with longing to his return at the end of time."

But hope is fragile and joy struggles to survive. And so an Advent People ask an Advent God to "open our hearts in welcome. Remove the things that hinder us from receiving Christ with joy ... May the lure of greed not impede us from the joy that moves the hearts of those who seek him. May the darkness not blind us to the vision of widsom which fills the minds of those who find him." (Week II) "Increase our strength of will for doing good that Christ may find an eager welcome at his coming and call us to his side in the kingdom of heaven." (Week I) "May we experience the joy of salvation." (Week III)

An Advent People is a needy people: struggling, hopeful, fragile and searching, but joyful in the promise of God that rests upon them. And so we turn to that God, remembering the joy of his first coming, and expectantly waiting for him to come again. We do not pretend that Christ is not yet born. Rather we rejoice in that birth in this season and "wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ."

Lord,
as you revealed to us by an angel
so lead us through
the coming of your Son as one like ourselves,
so lead us through his suffering and death
to the glory of his resurrection,
for he lives and reigns with you.

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