

Read - Think - Pray

Second Sunday of Advent, 5-9 December, Prepared by: Angus Kelly

Monday

Psalm

Psalm 85:1-2 & 8-13

Think:

Verse 10 has got to be one of the most beautiful lines in the Bible: 'Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other.'

Christmas is a time of longing; especially for the lonely and disempowered - longing for God to come down and put the world straight; longing for the Kingdom vision that Jesus preached.

Pray:

Meditate on the words of the Psalmist - and long for the day that the Kingdom will come. 'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.'

Tuesday

Old Testament

Isaiah 40:1-11

Think:

"Here is your God!" (Isaiah 40:9)

Look for the ways in which Isaiah describes God in this passage; a gentle comforting shepherd; who will carry lambs in his bosom and gently feed the mother sheep.

We long for God in our world, to bring justice to nations and economies; but there is what seems like a smaller work that we long for - the work of God in each of us. We long for God in our hearts.

Pray:

'Come to my heart, Lord Jesus!
There is room in my heart for Thee.'

Wednesday

Epistle

2 Peter 3:8-15a

Think:

There is always a lot of talk about the 'end being nigh'. Peter seems to be writing to churches who didn't think it was near enough and were losing patience while waiting. He reminds us that God's time and our time are not the same; God is patient.

'...in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. Therefore beloved while you are waiting for these things, strive to

be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish.'

Pray:

Lord, bless us with patience as we see injustice in the world around us. Bless us with patience as we know that you are at work in us and the world around us - knowing that you will set the world to rights.

Thursday

Gospel

Mark 1:1-8

Think:

'The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ...'

John announces and anticipates what Jesus will do; yet it seems that he dies disappointed, he sends his messengers to ask if Jesus truly is the one. I think we sometimes feel the same, because we find ourselves in the middle of the story - and not at the end.

But - Jesus does give us a good beginning, its up to us to live the middle part of the story; because each of us are a testament to the 'good news'.

Pray:

Through Jesus, God has begun something in each of us; working by the power of the Holy Spirit (verse 8) to transform us into his likeness. Ask the Holy Spirit to continue her gentle work in each of us.

Friday

Next week's gospel

John 1:6-8 and 19-28

Think:

'He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.'

We're not always who we hoped we'd be; but this line from John often comforts me when I am disappointed in myself and others... we're just signposts, not the 'real deal'.

Pray:

Lord, help us to speak the truth about you - so that others would know the light you have to shed in our and their hearts.

Amen