

OUR LADY STAR OF THE SEA WEYMOUTH

HOMILY FOR THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT (SCHOOL MASS)

16th DECEMBER 2012

Advent is the time of year when we get ready for Christmas.

When Christmas comes we are ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus. We carry the baby Jesus to the crib and put him in the manger and worship him. By carrying him to the manger, from outside the stable to inside the stable we are reminded that in Jesus God came to us from outside our lives to inside our lives.

That happened a very long time ago but it's more than history.

God still comes to us into our souls if we ask him to and if we recognise him when he comes.

He comes to us at Mass, most closely of all in Holy Communion, but he also comes to us through the Bible – Holy Scripture.

We call Scripture “holy” because God speaks to us through the words that we read and hear. Scripture is God’s word. That’s why we end our readings at Mass by saying, “The Word of the Lord” because that is what it is, the Lord speaking to us.

Our children preparing for their first Holy Communion and their parents have been thinking about this over the past few weeks. This morning they will receive their own copies of God’s Word. Let’s pray that God will come to them and speak to them as they read.

Parents and children do pray that you will hear God speaking to you in your souls as you read.

In school Year 5 and Year 6 we have tried doing this and we have been amazed at the prayers we have been able to pray after reading God’s Word quietly and with full attention.

If God speaks to us through Scripture we should respond with prayer – thanks for what we have learnt, sorrow for sin revealed and asking for the ability to do whatever God is asking us to do.

Last Sunday the whole Church was invited to pray for openness to the Word of God.

That means reading and listening to Scripture with a mind open to change, being ready to give and forgive, to do whatever will make our world a better place, more like God’s kingdom of justice, peace and love.

It will only happen if we are open-minded enough to be ready to change.

In today's Gospel the tax-collectors and soldiers heard God's word through the preaching of John the Baptist.

When they had heard they asked: "What must we do?"

That's the question we must always ask when we have read and heard God's word. If we know God's will for us and do it he will have come not only to us but to the world in which we live.

That's the point of Christmas and Christmas is just the start of a Christian life.

Rev Geoff Carey