



From the Desk of Father Peter

Advent and the Sacrament of Reconciliation

Advent is a time for us to look into our spirituality as we struggle to hear God's Word from Scriptures, and do our best to respond to it. Scripture opens our hearts and fills us with the hope that we can more fully return to God in our preparation to welcome the Christ. Our theme this year is Jesus, Come Heal Us. We should do our best to make ourselves available to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Come for a blessing—we all need it. Many of us may be living lives that are full but not fulfilling. We may be overwhelmed with responsibilities and worries, consumed by busyness, clutter, or the complex demands society places upon us. What we really yearn for is peace, wholeness, and simplicity. We are in the holy season that, unfortunately, has been overrun by consumerism. As we enter more fully into the holy season of Advent, let us realize the seriousness of the season and not underestimate its importance as a time of hope and renewal, a time of promise and expectation, and not just a festival of shopping, gift wrapping, and decorating. The message of John the Baptist is "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths." No one, then or now, wants to hear that they must change. Our society does not like that kind of talk, but John the Baptist says that God is about to break into our lives. When such a word is received with a ready heart, we are gently carried further along on our way to God. What is that voice saying to you today? Listen



to it! Pay attention and treasure it. Turn to that voice. It might be a good time to take a few moments in silence and reflection to ask ourselves—how are we allowing the message of John the Baptist to take root in us? Advent is a time to call on our baptismal identity and ask for help from God's grace in order to straighten out our life's path if it has developed twists and turns. Instead, let's fill the valleys of our emptiness and longing for God.



*Happy Advent Season to All,
Father Peter*