



9 December 2018, 8 a.m. | 2nd Sunday of Advent Year C |
Children's Mass
Baruch 5:1-9 | Psalm 126 | Philippians 1:3-6, 8-11 | Luke 3:1-6

REMOVING ROADBLOCKS

Introduction

Today, we move one step closer to the great feast of the birth of Christ, and we repeat in our hearts the words, 'Come, Lord Jesus'. But even as we say these words, we put obstructions in the way of Jesus' coming. We are sorry for this and we ask God to be the light in our lives as we now light the Advent candle.

Homily

My dear friends, we have just seen the children's skit, with Jesus on one side, and the road to him has various blocks. Children, which is the most common word that is always repeated in Advent hymns? Yes, it is the word 'coming'. So while we say to Jesus, 'Come', we also put lots of obstructions and roadblocks in his way. There was a time when I liked to travel via LBS Marg. But now, there are many roadblocks there because they are trying to build the metro system, and all the traffic is blocked. So, while we have a nice road, there are so many roadblocks that people cannot travel easily.

In the same way, we have also put blocks in the way to Jesus, and through their skit, these children have identified three ways in which we are blocking Jesus from coming to us at Christmas. One is the overuse of mobile phones. How many of you children are using smartphones too much? Raise your hands. Yes, quite a few of you. I think if we ask the adults present here this question, they will also admit to the same problem. We have become addicts, constantly checking our phones, sending messages and wasting our time. How many of us are wasting precious time of our life by the overuse of this very practical tool? Let us, during this season of Advent, take a small decision to use our mobile phone only when it is necessary.

What was the second obstruction we saw in the skit? We saw a girl watching TV all the time, one programme after the other the whole evening. Yes, this is one of the obstructions that we put in the way of Jesus, and so we have no time to pray, to read the scriptures and to welcome Jesus.

The third roadblock we saw was excessive shopping. Now at Christmas, we will all want to buy some new clothes and shoes. Sometimes, we can go overboard buying things. We don't check what we already have but we go and buy more and more. We see the advertisements, the sales, and are carried away, wanting what we may not even need. This is another block in our relationship with Jesus.

In the gospel of today, John teaches us three things that we need to do to prepare for the coming of Jesus. The gospel says, 'The Word of God came to John. During this season of Advent, let us decide to read the Bible a little more. I would say to you children, read at least the first chapters of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, which speak about beginnings – the birth of Christ, especially in the gospel according to Luke. So, spend at least five minutes every day reading a passage from one of the gospels.

The second thing that the gospel says is that John went into the wilderness, a place that is quiet. We need such quiet time to sit and listen to God and to pray. Let us make an effort this Advent to spend a few moments in silent prayer every day.

The third thing we can do to prepare ourselves for Jesus is repentance. Repentance changes our lives. Next week, we will have the sacrament of confession in our parish. Let us pray that all of us may truly repent of our sins and make an 'about turn' in our lives, so that we are able to welcome Jesus at Christmas.

So, let us remove the roadblocks and let us put into our lives instead a little time to read the scriptures, especially the first chapters of the four gospels; let us make some time to be quiet like John in the wilderness of the desert; and let us all repent of whatever wrong we have done, of all our sins, and let us come closer to Jesus Christ.

The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray with confidence to our Heavenly Father that each one of us may take away the roadblocks that obstruct the coming of Jesus in our lives by the power of God's word and through our repentance. Let us present our lives to the Father.



Fr Cleophas Fernandes
Parish Priest, St. Pius X Church