



Hope for Uncertain Times

"I have been with you wherever you went." 2 Samuel 7:9

The word "hope" is prevalent through the entire season of Advent. Normally, this is great gentle reminder of God's providence and care. This year, it hits me a bit differently. I find myself a little bristly if someone tries to be too flippant with their attempts to lift my spirits. "You got this" memes and "we are all in the same boat" sentiments are falling flat. I struggle trying not to stay stuck in the feeling of weariness. I love the season of Advent with its sense of calm and peace. There is a sense of expectation, anticipation and yes, hope.

We have been through a lot these last 10 months. We have been challenged, like never before. We have had to change how we do our jobs, keep our distance from people we love, worry about getting a virus, worry about people we love getting a virus... And this just scratches the surface of all the things we have dealt with this year. COVID 19 added a layer to what is often an already complex life. We may wonder if we are being effective in what we do. We wonder if we are making a difference. We may wonder where God is in all of this.

The challenge of Advent and the call to hope might make us dig a bit deeper this year. Many of us rely on our faith in good times and in bad times but even that is different this year. I feel like I have had to rely on my faith even more in 2020 but without attending Mass in person as regularly. While I have enjoyed watching Mass on TV or the internet from different places in the world, it has left me wanting – missing the feeling of being connected to a community of faith and the reception of the Eucharist.

So where does this leave us? I think God is calling us to seek and find him in new ways and in different places. When things are tough, we have to dig a bit deeper but God is always faithful.

"Never has there been a time when God failed to accompany our lives, even during those times when we have not felt a sense of the divine presence... This Advent, let us look for signs of where and how God moves in and through the common occurrences of our days. Let us see this presence amid our hurried activities and in the calm moments at communal worship and personal prayer. Let us recognize God's graced movement in our own and others' kindnesses... We have the courage to continue hoping in spite of what appears to be dismal. This Advent, let us revive our hope." (*Constant Hope*, by Joyce Rupp, p. 7)

God of Hope, remind us of your constant presence. Open our eyes to the signs of hope all around us in the days and weeks to come.

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