

SECOND WEEK OF ADVENT: FAITH

The first full week of December brings with it the start of that inescapable feeling that Christmas is definitely coming. Even the gas station has silk poinsettias stuck in their flowerpots. Everything feels more urgent, more intense, than other times. Every joy is more joyful, every pain is more painful, every moment of grief is more deep.

We light the second candle on the Advent wreath: the candle of Faith. This past year has called us to have a great deal of faith. We had to have faith in our resilience to overcome this pandemic, and faith in ourselves to get through it. For some, their faith in God has increased as they realized how little control we humans really have over our world and our own lives. For others, their faith has begun to run down, like the charge in our cell phone by the end of the day. If God was real, and really loved us, and was truly good, why is all this happening?

Faith can be many things. It can be a lighthouse showing us the way forward when we can't see it for ourselves, or just some relic of our past. How do we see our own faith, and how might this image have changed as time has passed?

This week at Sunday Mass we hear: *The Lord does not delay his promise, as some regard "delay," but he is patient with you, not wishing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9)*

The Lord has promised redemption to all who hear and act on his word. We don't know when this will come for us, but we believe that it will. In this letter, the writer reminds us that this "delay" is not God's forgetfulness or his ignoring us, but he "is patient with you, not wishing that any should perish". He gives us the time and tools we need to be the best we can be for ourselves and others. He gives us a chance to keep growing, keep seeing what we could do better and keeping working towards it.

The Lord has faith in us, no matter what we do or who we are. The question is: do we have even a fraction of this faith in him?

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