

Homily

1 Advent (C)

29 November 2015

Good Lord, deliver us from all well-meaning politicians, who think they can solve the world's problems by passing some new piece of legislation at Westminster or by dropping bombs in some far-flung part of the Middle East.

What we celebrate today, on Advent Sunday, is Christian hope. Christian hope is not the same thing as blind optimism. *There will be signs in the sun and moon and stars; on earth nations in agony.* The journey to the Promised Land is not going to be without trials and tribulations. Things are not always going to turn out as we want them to, or how we had planned. *For the powers of heaven will be shaken.*

Christian hope is a gift from God, infused into our souls at Baptism. But it's a gift we won't fully understand or appreciate until Our Lord Jesus Christ comes with all his saints. *See the days are coming - it is the Lord who speaks - when I am going to fulfil the promise I made to the House of Israel and the House of Judah.* God is faithful. We may give up on him but he never gives up on us. We really are going to see him as He is. Our love really will be so increased that we will find ourselves completely united in Him.

Engagement with the political process - yes. Engagement in our local communities - yes. Engagement with all men and women of faith - yes. But, engagement primarily with God who is trying to save us - engagement with the traditional disciplines of the Church; engagement with *staying awake*; engagement with *praying at all times*.

The war against terror will not be won with drones and bombs and ever-increasing domestic security measures. The war against terror will be won through prayer and dialogue, through *praying at all times for the strength to survive all that is going to happen and to stand with confidence before the Son of Man.*

As the Preface to our Eucharistic Prayer today suggests the Christian virtue of hope will make us different. Being people of hope will make us holy. Being people of hope will actually hasten and help and bring about that future liberation for which we long.

Even so, Come, Lord, Jesus.

Fr Michael