

Tuesday of the Second Week of Advent



Prepare a way for the Lord, make a straight highway for our God in the desert. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain (Is:40:3-4).

A straight road

For 20 years I lived in Worthington, MN, and with some frequency traveled toward Aberdeen, stopping when I could at my parents' farm near Conde. At the end of a school day with car packed, I would traverse the user-friendly interstates, rejoicing in the flatlands, asking or thanking God for a bountiful harvest that could feed the world, praying for those who worked the land. I would turn onto Hwy 20 at Watertown and soon would be going up hills with high drop-offs, down into a valley, up and down again and again. I would remember that my great-grandmother whom I knew well, her husband and his parents had also traveled these hills and in a covered wagon slowly, ever so slowly. There was no straight highway all prepared for them. I often wondered what they were thinking and feeling, wondering, hoping and worrying about as they traveled a few miles each day over the prairie.

Moving from one place to another isn't always easy, whether the move be physical, psychological or spiritual. Isaiah knew that. He and many Israelites were still living in Babylon after decades of captivity there and many must have despaired of any return to their own land. Yet Isaiah was commissioned by God to "comfort, oh comfort my people;" to help them believe that God still walked with them and was at work to free them. History tells us that their exile in Babylon did end, that a number of Israelites did indeed return to their homeland, and that the Israelites viewed this as God's work, a second exodus.

During our four weeks of Advent, we can easily be held in a captivity of sorts with all the time and preparation needed for Christmas gifts and gatherings. So how during this particularly busy season do we prepare the way for our God? No doubt each of us will find different ways, from making space for moments of solitude to reaching out to others. We can also remember that as God was at work with the Israelites, leveling mountains and valleys, so to speak, for the road home toward Jerusalem, God is also active in us, helping us move toward the deep peace and joy that can be found only in God.

**Dear God, help us to
see you more clearly,
follow you more nearly,
love you more dearly,
this Advent season and always.
Amen.**

Sister Francene Evans, PBVM

[Click here to view the USCCB Daily Scripture Readings](#)