

Dear Parishioners,

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I can't believe the season of Advent is already upon us! It's a season when we remember the first coming of Christ, and we look forward to the second coming of Christ. However, I've always loved the famous Advent homily of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, in which he talks about a third coming of Jesus Christ! It's actually a "coming" between the other two, when the Lord comes to each one of us over and over again to transform us. We have to be open to this intermediate coming of Jesus, in order to be prepared for his second coming. Here are Saint Bernard's beautiful words:

*We know that there are three comings of the Lord. The third lies between the other two. It is invisible, while the other two are visible.*

*In the first coming he was seen on earth, dwelling among men; he himself testifies that they saw him and hated him. In the final coming all flesh will see the salvation of our God, and they will look on him whom they pierced. The intermediate coming is a hidden one; in it only the elect see the Lord within their own selves, and they are saved. In his first coming our Lord came in our flesh and in our weakness; in this middle coming he comes in spirit and in power; in the final coming he will be seen in glory and majesty.*

*In case someone should think that what we say about this middle coming is sheer invention, listen to what our Lord himself says: "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him." There is another passage of Scripture which reads: "He who fears God will do good", but something further has been said about the one who loves, that is, that he will keep God's word. Where is God's word to be kept? Obviously in the heart, as the prophet says: "I have hidden your words in my heart, so that I may not sin against you."*

*Keep God's word in this way. Let it enter into your very being, let it take possession of your desires and your whole way of life. Feed on goodness, and your soul will delight in its richness. Remember to eat your bread, or your heart will wither away. Fill your soul with richness and strength.*

Pretty inspiring, isn't it! Have a blessed Advent season!

*In cordibus Iesu et Mariae,*

Father Poggemeyer