

Sunday Homily
Third Sunday of Advent
Zep 3:14-18a; Phil 4:4-7; Lk 3:10-18
December 13, 2009

By Deacon Jeff Claar

It seems like there is always plenty to be anxious about; and today, with the economy and other things going on in our world it is an anxious time. In particular, some of us here have lost jobs or at least we know someone who has lost their's. And when that happens anxiety is very real.

But yet, St. Paul tells us not to be anxious, but let the Lord know exactly what we need.

In our Gospel today, the crowds are asking John the Baptist "what should we do?" And John's answer to them is appropriate for us today. He tells them to share what they have with those less fortunate and to live out their lives in society, whatever that may be, in an honest way by treating each other with kindness and fairness.

Maybe you are like me; sometimes it seems that the problems are so big, we wonder what good we can do? What difference can we make? We are so busy, we are trying to do the right things at home and at work; and that leaves us with little extra time to give back.

But that is the beauty of today's message from Scripture. We are not called to do everything; but, we are called to do our part. And when we all do just our part, by joining our efforts together as a parish, we truly can make a big impact and lessen the anxiety of those in our community.

Just as the crowds asked John, "what should we do", today we ask "what should we do"?

First, let's live well the vocation we have chosen by treating others well. That is our first obligation at home and in society.

Second, we can share some of the food we have with others in need. Today is our first SECOND SUNDAY Food Collection. It is one new way here at St. Mary's of sharing some of what we have with those less fortunate.

Today, after Mass fellow parishioners will be handing out brown grocery bags at all the exits. The label will suggest some items to purchase, but you choose what you can do. Next Sunday we will bring our grocery bags back to Mass. On Monday, we will donate a truckload of food to be distributed by Care & Share to the hungry in our community.

Our goal is to donate a total of 500 bags of groceries. I don't even know what 500 bags of groceries look like, but I do know that we are a generous parish and when we know that there is a real need, we respond. I am confident that our "kindness will be known to all" as St. Paul says.

Please remember to pick up your bag on the way home today and may God bless those who will receive, and us His thankful servants!