

Heart ♥ to ♥ Heart



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Second Week of Advent 2021

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1st Reading: Baruch 5:1-9

2nd Reading: Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11

Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

I am struck by the line, '*...take off your robe of mourning and misery*' in the reading from the prophet Baruch. It is surely what we have been wearing the last 20+ months with the plague of our lifetimes. I wonder if it is time to put on a different robe?

For over 40 years, I have abided with the 4-H program in the Pacific Northwest. One of the traditional projects is sewing. Youth take fabric and sew various objects, garments, or artwork guided by the light of a good parent or leader.

One of the concluding activities that I have adapted from 4-H for spiritual direction is "*The Fabric of our Lives*." For several years in Idaho a concluding activity to group spiritual direction is this activity! Pilgrims robe themselves from a basket of fabric and tell their story. In most cases it is a story of triumph, hope and/or joy – one congruent with our Advent Season. They rise up from the deserts of their lives, wrap, robe, themselves in Hope; preparing the Way mindful of the conclusion to today's Gospel:

*A voice of one crying out in the desert:
"Prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight his paths.
Every valley shall be filled
and every mountain and hill shall be made low.
The winding roads shall be made straight,
and the rough ways made smooth,
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."*

How might you wrap, robe, yourself in the fabric of Hope, preparing the Way mindful of today's Gospel?

—Kevin Laughlin
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