

A Pre Advent Hi Note November 2012

I trust that you all understand the reason why we are here; why God has thrown together this collection of people in this place and at this time. Firstly we constitute a unique community. There has never been nor will there ever be an assemblage of souls such as we are in the same place. The assembled gifts, temperaments, world-views and skills will never appear in this way again. You get the point. And so we must ask why? Well, because the circumstances of our present are similarly unique and thus require this unique battalion in order to redeem it. Remember that followers of Christ are constantly moving – moving from one degree of glory to the next – and growing into the fullness and stature of Christ Himself! I wonder how many of us actually believe that. We know the full range of what we are capable of. We know that we have everything necessary to be able to accomplish the redeeming the world immediately around us but we also know our capacity for evil. This knowledge holds us back sadly and so we cannot walk out of our quagmire of evil and we sink deeper and deeper into it. I must admit that I am there too. Perhaps the only difference is that I know and believe that where we are is not where we are meant to be and so I keep speaking to your and my higher self. I call you Saint, Messiah; I call you God alongside St Athanasius. Too often we reject that and forget that that was why Jesus was born, lived, died and was resurrected! Alongside that Paul reminds us in his letter to the Romans that the very power that caused Jesus to be raised from the dead is present and available to us even now. So why do we cut such a sad and depressing figure in the world.

Is it because we have listened too much to the anti-God movement and what's more we have allowed it to determine our identity. Could it be that we have been trying so hard to find acceptance that we have allowed the world to shape us rather than allowing God to shape us and to determine our mission?

So here we – all that is needed to heal the world around us and we are stuck on a circular track and we are failing. We are stuck in the past actually. The past for too many of us is the solid foundation. But it is not the whole picture. We have to be like babies whose courage knows no bounds and who would happily crawl off the carpet not knowing what lies beyond – possibly even a hundred metre precipice! We would rather hang around the safe space around the edge of the edges and stay with what appears to be secure. But God is not where things are secure. God is in the valley of the shadow of death. God is where it is dark and cold and lonely. God is in the unknown. God only comes to the places where we are vulnerable – to the places where we are not sure; insecure. God only comes to these places – though God is everywhere – because we cry out to God to come. We cry out spontaneously and from deep within ourselves. God always responds to that – to authenticity; realness. God always responds to the “Oh God, come quickly!”

Too often though our “Oh Gods” are for the wrong reason. We don't want to stay in the journey. We want an easy way out. We don't want to grow into the fullness and stature of Christ. We don't want to be Messiah (simply just God's anointed). We want to stay with

what we know and know well. We don't want to crawl off the carpet. We want to build tents and just stay where we are. And so the world does not get healed or saved. We all stay in the bog sinking imperceptibly into irrelevance. And this is not our mission. I have never thought it my mission as your Priest to make you comfortable. My vocation is to push you out of the familiar into the God Zone beyond the familiar. We have to crawl off the carpet, we have to sell all we have, we have to leave our occupations as *fisherfolk* and become fishers of humanity; for humanity.

Come beloved. Come, we must go. The world around us is desperately in need of what we have assembled here. This Advent I hope that we will all crawl to the edge of the carpet and then when the edge turns out to be a precipice God will come and save us and then we can save others.