

Peace Prayer

By John Foley

See print copy for words and music.

Old Orchard Church

Second Sunday of Advent

December 8, 2013—10:15 to 11:50 a.m.



The angel appears to Joseph in a dream.

We celebrate the Lord's Supper weekly—and in a circle, at the end of worship. A word of direction is given, and with this everyone stands and moves to the walls. The cup is passed in two forms: in a chalice and then in small individual cups. You are free to choose.

And as this is the Supper of the Lord Christ, please listen to the instructions we give as to what qualifies a visitor to participate. **But whether you intend to take communion or not, please join us in the circle.**

Cover art: Pen and brush drawing. Rembrandt (c. 1652)

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God chose the weak things of the world to
shame the strong. He chose the lowly things
of this world and the despised things—
and the things that are not—
to nullify the things that are....

—1 Cor. 1:27–28 (NIV)—

Celebrating The Three Comings of Jesus Christ

His "Second" Coming: In the Soul

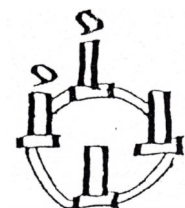
Jesus replied,
"Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching.
My Father will love them,
and we will come to them
and make our home with them."

John 14:23

Today's Scripture

Promise and Fulfillment: Isaiah 7:10-14; Matthew 1:18-23

Gospel Reading: Luke 1:39-45



Mini-series

Autonomy in the City of Man or Purity in the Kingdom of God

Today's Sermon

"The Ministry of John the Baptist
and the Scandal of Antipas and Herodias" (conclusion) and
"Joseph and the Scandal of His Fiancée's Pregnancy"
Matthew 1:18-24

Ron Lutjens, lead pastor, preaching

Advent Desire

There are two "Great Comings" of Christ, his coming 2000 + years ago as the Lamb of God to deal with sin, and his coming at the end of history as the Lion of Judah to vindicate his people as Judge of the world. But between those two Comings, Christ "comes" again and again—to all who turn to him. He comes now, not in the flesh but in the power of the Holy Spirit. He comes to forgive our faults and cover us with his righteousness; he comes to comfort us and heal our wounds; he comes to confront us and work his own goodness into us in those areas where we have not been in pursuit of the "right living" he calls us to as citizens of the kingdom he established in his first coming.

Below is a meditation on the sin of *sloth*, one of the so-called "seven deadly sins." It poses a good question during Advent: What good is the "second coming" of Christ to us "in the soul," if we are not looking for it, not desiring very much of what he has to give us in the here and now? So examine yourself this week; but take heart, too—it is possible to stir up desire for God if we choose to do it, asking God even to empower our choice, since, mysteriously it is he who enables us to turn to him in the first place.

—Ron Lutjens

According to the Fathers of the Church, sloth is not laziness so much as "acedia"—dejection or melancholy, the sorrow in the Divine Good. Such a man has his son, but his son bores him. He possesses his beloved, but he finds her incapable of stirring his interest. Apathy would be a better term to describe this profound dejection. The soul in this state is beyond mere sadness and melancholy. It has removed itself from the rise and fall of feeling; the very root of its feelings in desire is dead. To be human is to desire. The good man desires God and other things in God. The sinful man desires things in the place of God, but he is still recognizably human, inasmuch as he knows desire. The slothful man, however, is a dead man, an arid waste. His desire itself has dried up. Perhaps boredom is the best modern term to characterize this deadness of soul. In boredom before God it is man who has failed his object, not the reverse. Although the modern sophisticate feels no need to apologize for being bored—since he thinks his boredom is caused by the poverty of his object—the man of faith must confess his boredom as his sin because his attitude reflects the poverty of his own soul. To be unmoved and untouched in the presence of God exposes an interior inadequacy.

—W.F. May in A Catalogue of Sins