

1st Sunday of Advent (Cycle B)

Community Staff Prayer

Isaiah: Yearning For The Divine



Ecard available from www.liturgicalprayer.com

Preparation:

The Leader arranges an Advent Wreath on a deep blue cloth with the Bible open at Isaiah Chapter 63. The CD and player have been set up. The Leader has prepared prayer leaflets for each person. S/he invites two people to proclaim the Scripture for today's Prayer.

Introduction:

Leader: In the four Weeks of Advent, we begin a new cycle of Scripture. Let us look at the *journey of life* through the eyes of four key people who urge us to open our hearts and minds to the Divine. In Week 1, we hear the cry of Isaiah, the Prophet.

WE GATHER

Call to Prayer:

Leader: Lord, let us turn to you,
All: Let us see you face and we shall be saved.

Gathering Song:

Tear the Heavens Asunder (Monica Brown – Comfort My People)

WE LISTEN

Scripture Focus: Isaiah 63: 16-17 and 64: 1. 3-8 (adapted)

Voice 1: You, Lord, yourself are our Father,
Our Redeemer is your ancient name.

All: We are the clay, you are the potter,
We are all the work of your hand.

Voice 2: Why, Lord, leave us to stray from your ways
and harden our hearts against respecting you?
Return, for the sake of your servants, the tribes of your inheritance.

All: We are the clay, you are the potter,
We are all the work of your hand.

Voice 1: Oh, that you would tear the heavens open and come down
- at your Presence the mountains would melt.

All: We are the clay, you are the potter,
We are all the work of your hand.

Voice 2: No ear has heard, no eye has seen any god but you
Who act like this for those who live in trust.

All: We are the clay, you are the potter,
We are all the work of your hand.

Breaking Open The Word /Reflection:

The Leader asks the questions:

- In your heart of hearts, what do you yearn for the most in your life?
- Have you ever seen this yearning as a desire for Divine Presence?

- How do you express your yearning in everyday living?
- Speak to God in your heart about this desire ...

(Pause now for some seconds of silence)

If there is enough time (and enough trust in the group), people may like to share a little of their reflections ...

WE RESPOND

Ritual:

Leader:

To desire something means to acknowledge our need.
In the depths of our being, each of us longs for something that will fill our unique emptiness. *(pause) ...*

I invite you now to hold out your hands, palms facing upwards,
as a sign that you are ready to receive the gift of God for your life.

Let your *desire* awaken your heart ... Ask for the gift ...
Allow yourself to be moulded like clay in God's loving hands ...

Pause while people do this small ritual in silence ...

When all have completed the ritual, the Leader says:

Leader:

Let us awaken to the presence of God who comes to dwell within us!

All:

Let us pray ...
O Radiant Dawn,
Our hearts desire the warmth of your love.
Our minds are searching for the light of your truth.
Open our hearts and minds to receive your gift,
Your Word of Life.
May the new dawn of his coming
Find us awake and ready to rejoice in his presence.
We ask this in the name of Jesus,
And in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

WE GO

Leader:

Rejoicing, as our hearts awaken to God's promise,
Let us encourage one another with a sign of peace ...