

4th Sunday of Advent (B)

It is often of benefit to read the meditations of past Christians, to encounter the various truths and celebrations of our faith through the eyes of our ancestors in the faith who have come before us, who celebrated these same realities we do.

The following is from a sermon by blessed Gueric of Igny

Our King and Savior is coming; let us run to meet him! *Good news from a far country*, in the words of Solomon, *is like cold water to a thirsty soul*; and to announce the coming of our Savior and the reconciliation of the world, together with the good things of the life to come, is to bring good news indeed. Such messengers truly bear refreshment to the soul that thirsts for God; with their news of the Savior's coming, they joyfully offer us water from the springs of salvation. In the words and spirit of Elizabeth, the soul responds to the message: *Why is this granted to me, that my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the voice of your greeting came to my ears, my spirit leapt for joy within me in eager longing to run ahead to meet my God and Savior.*

Let us too arise with joy and run in spirit to meet our Savior. Hailing him from afar, let us worship him, saying, *Come, Lord, save me and I shall be saved! Show us your face, and we shall all be saved. We have been waiting for you; be our help in time of trouble.* This was how the prophets and saints of old went to meet the Messiah, filled with immense desire to see with their eyes, if possible, what they already saw in spirit.

We must look forward to the day, so soon to come, on which we celebrate the anniversary of Christ's birth. Scripture insists on the joy which must fill us - a joy which will lift our spirit out of itself in longing for his coming, impatient of delay as it strains forward to see even now what the future holds in store.

As we believe that our bodies will rise up rejoicing at his second coming, so our hearts must run forward to greet his first coming.

Between these two comings the Lord frequently visits us individually, in accordance with our desires and our merits. He forms us to the likeness of his first coming in the flesh and so prepares us for his return at the end of time. He comes to us now to make sure that we don't lose the fruits of his

first coming nor incur wrath at his second. Christ's purpose now is to convert our pride into the humility which he showed when he first came, so that he may refashion our lowly bodies into the likeness of his glorified body that he will manifest when he comes again.

And so, brothers and sisters, though we have not yet experienced this wonderful consolation, we are encouraged by firm faith and a pure conscience to wait patiently for the Lord to come. In joy and confidence let us say with St. Paul: "I know the one in whom I have believed, and I am confident of his power to guard what has been entrusted to me until the day when our great God and Savior Jesus Christ comes in glory. May he be praised for ever and ever. Amen.