

## *Fourth Wednesday of Lent - 3/5*

"Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth; break forth, O mountains, into singing! For the Lord has comforted his people, and will have compassion on his suffering ones." (Isaiah 49:13)

This reading seems a little out of place for Lent. It sounds more like an Advent reading, doesn't it? After all what can one sing about during Lent? Fasting and penance are to be endured not celebrated, aren't they? Do many people sing their way through Lent?

Right smack dab in the middle of Lent we are reminded that God has already come to us. We don't have to wait for Holy Week or Easter. At this very moment God is present with comfort for all. God's compassion flows over right now and if we have eyes to see it then we probably have ears to hear the mountains singing too.

Lent is a time to become aware of God in the "right now," in the present. It is a time to remember that the promise of the expected Savior has been fulfilled and that Jesus is already here. This is not a time to wish for the end of Lent but a time to live the Lenten experience fully. When we look ahead to Easter we miss the Resurrection that is meant for today.

Those who live the Lenten experience uncover something wonderful. It may not be visible for anyone to see, but the long expected Savior births in his or her hearts over and over again. The Christ child comes in the new insight that they get or the smile that comes their way from the unexpected person. The mountains are made low when they are able to let go of resentment. The gift of the baby Jesus is alive when they first begin to find new life in the midst of suffering.

The joy of new birth cannot be programmed. Blessings will come out of season so we need to be prepared to accept comfort and joy as much as sacrifice and penance during Lent. God does not sit back during Lent to see how much we are going to grow. He will continue to come, continue to open doors for us, continue to move our mountains. And if today is beginning to look a lot like Christmas then celebrate the joy that has come to your world. This is meant to be your Lenten experience.

### *Reflection Questions*

- 1. What door is God opening for me this Lent?*
- 2. Am I entering joyfully?*

*Prayer: Jesus, come into my heart today. May I always be aware that Your time of arrival can be anytime. Amen.*

