

## Homily - Advent 1 - Year C - December 2, 2018

“Some day my prince will come.” Both old and young among us can sing those famous words of Snow White. These dreamy words look to the future when, in the case of Snow White, the prince will come and radically transform her life and her world.

Dreaming of the future. Some people spend so much time dreaming about the future, a future that may or may not happen. Caught up in the future, they forget about the present, the here and the now, that needs our attention.

Time is such a strange commodity. In the *Great Gatsby* the novel's narrator reflects: “year by year recedes before us....But that's no matter - tomorrow we will run faster, stretch out our arms farther ....”

The only time that we have is the “right now.” The past is gone and is forever unchangeable. The future will be. We can prepare for it, help shape it, but ultimately we are not the masters of the future.

In Advent, we are celebrating time. In the present moment, we recall the history of salvation. We build our earthly existence so that we will be ready for the future whatever that may be.

Our scripture readings abound with references to the future. Isaiah speaks about: “The days are coming....In those days....at that time...” Jesus speaks about “the signs that will be in the sun, the moon, and the stars...and the Son of Man coming in a cloud.”

Doesn't all of this sound like Snow White and her singing about her prince to come? Skeptics might smile at us and, in disgust, ask when and how all this will happen.

Well, Jesus is not Snow White's Prince Charming, but Jesus is the one who came and the one who will come. Jesus is the beginning and the end. The American author Richard Bach wrote this: “What the caterpillar calls the end of the world, the master calls a butterfly.”

Advent reminds us about an event, but more importantly a person whose end meant the beginning of new life for us. Christ's death brought resurrected life to Christ and ultimately to each of us. The exhortations of Jesus about the end of the world may sound frightening, but they remind us that the end of life only brings on new life.

Yes, at Christmas we do celebrate that historical coming of Christ. But, likewise each day should be a celebration of Christ's coming into our lives and into our hearts. The coming of Christ was a moment in history.

The coming of Christ needs to be lived each day. Advent reminds us that Christmas can mean a breakdown in faith for those who do not actively believe in Christ or Christmas can be a breakthrough in faith for those actively responding to God's ever present invitation.

Our words of exhortation today come from Jesus in the gospel: "Beware that you hearts do not become drowsy from carousing and drunkenness and the anxieties of daily life." As we prepare to celebrate the great feast of Christmas, we must strive to keep the flame of faith alive in our hearts so that the light of Christ may burn brightly in our world. May the many Christmas lights that we see remind us clearly that Christ is the light who must ever burn brightly in our lives and in our world.