

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

Eccl 24: 1-2, 8-12

Eph 1:3-6, 15-18

John 1:1-18

HOMILY

Here we are at the beginning of a new year!

For sure 2020 has been a difficult year for many people.

Some will have lost their jobs or seen their income decrease significantly.

Many of our elderly population will have felt cut off from others because of the need to self-isolate.

It has been especially difficult for grandparents who for many months have not been able to meet up with family members. Think of young people or even of children who have not been able to socialize in ways that is normal for their age. Couples who got married in the last nine months spending time worrying begin their life together.

Even though we are in very worrying times with regard to the virus, we already can see some light at the end of the tunnel. I still have to say that it is still a distant end of tunnel.

The beginning of any new year can lend itself to being a hopeful time.

Even though we are in mid-winter, one thing that puts a smile on my face is just to remember that that each day is now 'that little bit longer' than the previous one.

Every beginning contains within itself seeds of hope; whether it is the beginning of a new year, a new job, a new relationship, a new enterprise. Something new comes along, which holds great promise.

Today's gospel reading announces that God has not remained silent.

God has communicated with us through the love-filled life of Jesus.

Jesus is the human face of God.

With God become human in Jesus, God is telling us that he has deep desire

- to be in communion with us,
- to get inside our skin as it were,
- to suffer with us,
- to become as vulnerable and fragile as we all are.

God has been struggling along with us until now there is a stream of vaccines coming through to protect humanity.

GOD SHARING IN OUR BROKENNESS

As a human being, Jesus who is born to us was fragile, vulnerable, prone to suffering and brokenness, and, yet, his life was charged with the glorious presence of God.

That's why for me we are not here to write off the year 2020.

We all learned an awful lot from 2020.

This year has been charged with the glorious presence of God.

You can recite numerous examples of your own. To point out a few:

Local authorities have found permanent homes for many individuals affected. It makes you wonder why they couldn't do that before.

Despite social distancing and self-isolation, people around the world are finding more than one way to connect to each other.

A grandmother shared with me the fun she had with online games with her grandchildren who could not join her physically at Christmas

A sense of community has been boosted in our midst in the year 2020. Certain people have felt cared for and looked after.

Neighbours and colleagues have literally been bending over backwards to be accommodating and to support others.

Even those who did not necessarily display those personality traits to start with are in the forefront

- Long may this continue.
- I hope that 2021 will not lead us to write off 2020 but rather enable our community and the world to be a lot more kinder.