

FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Brothers and Sisters



“Then the wolf shall be the guest of the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion shall browse together, with a little child to guide them.

The cow and the bear shall be neighbors, together their young shall rest; and the lion shall eat hay like the ox. The baby shall play by the cobra’s den, and the child lay his hand on the adder’s lair.

There shall be no harm or ruin on all my holy mountain; and the earth shall be filled with knowledge of the Lord.” Isaiah 11:8-9

Wednesdays are free at the Bronx Zoo. But the monkeys are behind bars, gorillas and lions are behind bullet-proof glass; tigers, bears, and hyenas are safely corralled from each other and from the viewing public.

The Prophet Isaiah speaks of animals as an allegory. Our parish, like any parish, is a microcosm of the larger world. There are all manner of people: parrots – always talking; hyenas –always laughing; koalas – don’t speak but take everything in; lions – can tear you to pieces; cubs – joking and messing about; groundhogs – they avoid other people; peacocks – they like to show off;

In the world, as in the zoo, fences are necessary. The lion can’t be near the kid because he will devour it; the gannet can’t be near the penguin because he’ll steal it’s eggs; the leopard will eat the cow, given half the chance!

Isaiah uses the imagery of a zoo to depict the coming of Christ - ADVENT

Unlike the Bronx Zoo, the Church has no bars or cages.

Christ is the little child, the baby who plays by the cobra’s den; with his presence no harm will be done.

He is able to break down all the barriers which divide us, he is able to bring Communion among us.

ADVENT announces that the lion and the calf can graze together; the leopard can lie down with the kid.

Communion is experienced not when the lion stops being a lion, or the bear stops being a bear. It comes from the fact that Christ is in our midst. Advent invites us to prepare for the coming of Christ, to make room for him within us.

Only then is it possible to come out of our cage and find that no harm is done.

Fr. Sean