

Rev. Paul A. Hottinger

**“Come to Me”**    Second Week of Advent    Wednesday, December 9, 2015    8:15 AM  
**Is 40:25-31;    Mt 11:28-30**    (St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin)    (This is an invitation to a personal commitment.)

**“For my yoke is easy, and my burden light.”**

It may not always seem so. That’s the actual point of the first reading from Isaiah. Now Isaiah is a huge book, and it wasn’t all written by the same person at the same time. The first part of Isaiah takes place prior to the great exile when Israel, at least the elite, was exiled to the land of Babylon in 587. That was a turning point, a major crisis in the life of the people of God, the people of Israel, who were at that point hardly anything more than the house of Judah and Benjamin because northern Israel had all been destroyed already in 721. So things are not looking good even before the exile. Then after the exile it’s even worse. This part comes from during the exile, the middle part. Then there is another part after the exile. The point is in the midst of this darkness, the prophet says, look, **you have to realize that God is at work even if you don’t see it.** Do not judge by appearances. God doesn’t judge by appearances; we must not judge by appearances. Things look bleak, things look dark, that doesn’t mean they are bleak and dark. **Reality is different from what appears to be so.** That’s the fundamental message of Isaiah.

In a way, Jesus as well. He is speaking to the crowds. He says, “Come to me.” Well, how is he going to help them? Well, not without their believing in him. “My yoke is easy.” Now the yoke is, of course, a collar worn by an ox. A poor man only had one ox, so he had to be on the other side of the yoke. There’s room for two. The poor man had to help the ox pull the plow. **Jesus’ point is I’ll be your helper. We will plow this field together. “My yoke is easy.”**

But for that to happen **we have to rely on him.** We have to surrender to him. That’s why he says, **“Come to me.” This is an invitation to a personal commitment,** and nothing less. Jesus

“Come to Me”

has read, of course, Isaiah and he believes a hundred percent that God is doing something great, and in spite of appearances there is on the horizon hope. But it's not as if God is going to do this all by himself and then we are just going to witness it. No, **Jesus' point is you've got to get involved now.** You've got to actually come to me. You have to **"take my yoke"**—take my yoke—take it and learn—**"and learn."** **This is a call to a real discipleship.** Sad to say, for millennia many, many Christian people have been baptized, they've come to the sacraments, but they've never really learned from him. They've really never taken the yoke. They've really never come to him.