

Sunday Homily

2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

5 DECEMBER 2021

YEAR C

DIVINE OFFICE WEEK II

“You will reach the perfect goodness
which Jesus Christ produces in us.”

Illustration

At the time of the London Blitz during the Second World War, in 1940, Coral Atkins, like thousands of other children, was evacuated to the countryside for her own safety. The people she stayed with were strict and cruel towards her, and this disrupted childhood experience haunted her adult years. She grew up to become a British theatre and television actress, and it was while making a celebrity appearance for charity one day that she saw Jessica, a little girl with a haunted face, living in a children's home.

This event triggered a deep impulse in Coral that she should do more than just make appearances at charity events. She decided to dedicate her life to lost children. She opened her own children's home. Disruptive, disturbed children, she said, are just children who need a lot of love, because they have had disruptive, disturbed experiences.

One day, one of Coral's helpers, a qualified assistant very much given to discipline, expressed her despair at Coral's simple method of love and patience. "I must protest," she said, "or else something terrible will happen." Coral was exasperated. "You just don't get it, do you?" she replied. "Something terrible has already happened to these children."

Coral's simple method was a profound understanding of these children's pain and needs. She instinctively knew what was going on inside their hearts, and she gave them unfailing love and attention and her utmost honest endeavour. By her integrity she gave them peace. By her devotedness she gave them honour. She helped them to recovery and to the restoration of their lives.

Gospel Teaching

This is the experience of the prophet Baruch in our first reading today. Something terrible has happened. The Jewish people are forced from their homes into exile, but Baruch can see a day of liberation in the future, when something wonderful will happen. Jerusalem will be restored, and the glory of God will shine for all to see.

This future day is given definition for us in the Gospel when Luke says exactly when it was that John the Baptist began his preaching along the Jordan valley. "In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar's reign" is when John came; and John's