

We've all played the game before. When we were little, and again if we had children and yet again if we have grandkids. Hide & Seek. One of us hides and the other counts to 10 and then seeks, looking and seeking all over the house or the yard to see and find! Maybe it happened to you, you hid so well that everyone else was found and they ended the game...and you were never found? How long did you wait? How long did you sit still? Did you wonder if they forgot you? Did you wonder if they ever looked for you? Yeah, that happens...

This is the season of Advent. The beginning of the Church Year. That time when we are looking towards Christmas. We are seeking Emmanuel, God with us. We are seeking the Christ...Jesus! We put up greenery, a crèche, a tree, and a wreath. We light candles and wait. We count down the days till Christmas. Till we celebrate with song and carols and feasts and presents. But...are we looking? Are we seeking? Are we finding Jesus? Or is this Advent stuff just a pregnant pause between Thanksgiving and Christmas, an interlude of a month or so? Where is Jesus? Have we forgotten to look, to seek, to find?

C.S. Lewis said "Next to the Blessed Sacrament itself, your neighbor is the holiest object presented to your senses." And he was right! Scripture itself tells us that we, you and I, and everyone we know and like or know and not like, all of us are created in the image and likeness of God. Jesus tells us that the Father and He will make their home with us. Paul tells us that Christ is in us, and that we are the very temple of the Holy Spirit! And remember what Jesus said about the sheep and the goats? Read it in Matt 25. As Jesus talks about helping others he clearly states that when we do something for another, we do it for him. There is a mysterious presence of Jesus in them...in me, in you.

And so, this is Advent. Christmas is coming. Emmanuel - God with us. But the game is already afoot! Are you seeking? Christ is present in each of us, the question we need to grapple with is this: Are we, am I, are you, seeking to see Jesus in your neighbor, in your friends, in your spouse, in your family, in the stranger, the store clerk, the poor, the needy, the homeless, the "other guy"?

Let us celebrate the coming of Jesus by finding Him present in one another! It's time, the countdown has ended, lets go out and seek...and find!

Peace and Grace,
Fr Eric