

Thursday-First Week of Advent- Hope and Answered Prayer

A Story of Hope and Answered Prayer

Six-year-old Johnny said to his friend Billy, also six years old, “I am going to become an atheist. I do not believe in God. God does not answer my prayers or anyone else’s prayers.” Billy, the “mini-theologian”, was stunned. “How can you say that? How can you not believe in God? God always answers my prayers.”

“Well,” replied the atheist-to-be, Johnny, “You prayed for a red bicycle, didn’t you?” When Billy answered in the affirmative, Johnny continued triumphantly, “Well did you get your bicycle – red, blue green or whatever colour?” “No,” replied Billy. “I did not get my bicycle.” Johnny was gloating now as he said, “See God does not answer prayers.” “Oh, but he did answer my prayers,” said Billy. “God said NO.”

Reflection

Our hope in God is not a vague pie in the sky mentality. It has been the fruit of the experience of generations that have gone before us. They had hope. They trusted. They were never let down. They knew about God’s steadfast love that endures!

Isaiah is speaking of the political welfare of Judah. Jesus speaks of putting one’s hope in someone who is reliable, someone whose love endures forever.

So often our hope in God and in other people depends on whether we get what we want from God or them. But what we want may not be what we need or what is good for us.

So often when we pray, we not only tell God what we want, but also tell God when, where, and how we want that prayer answered. God is

not an “item” from a department store with an RTM – Read the Manual instructions.

When we place our hope in God in prayer, it must be unconditional. Then as Jesus says in the Gospel – whether it rains or floods or the winds blow, our hope will not come tumbling down. It is a hope not built on sand, but on a firm foundation.

Question to Ponder

What are you hoping for now? Is it what you want or what you need? Is your belief based on whether you get what you want?