

A NOTE TO PARENTS

Our Scriptures for this Third Sunday in Advent range widely over the themes of memory and hope. We remember the mighty deeds that God has done:

*When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,
then were we like those who dream. ...*

*Then they said among the nations,
"The Lord has done great things for them."*

*The Lord has done great things for us,
and we are glad indeed. (Psalm 126:1, 3-4)*

From this memory we gain hope for future times of sorrow and pain: "Those who sowed with tears will reap with songs of joy" (verse 6).

Our reading from Isaiah 61 is a glorious vision of God sending his anointed one "to bring good news to the oppressed, to proclaim liberty to the captives ... to comfort all who mourn, ... to give them a garland instead of ashes." The prophet envisions God's people repairing the ruined cities; he sees them "clothed ... in the garments of salvation ... as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with jewels." Finally, he sees the nation springing into new life like a watered garden. This chapter is a kaleidoscope of images for renewal, restoration and healing. Sorrow and loss are real, but the exultant power and love of God bring such blessing and new life as to overshadow all grief and shame.

Talk with your child about memories, both happy and painful. This may be a time to bring up a sad or hurtful memory you both share. Can you find new understanding, healing, forgiveness or hope? It is hard for us to imagine that painful memories may be healed. It may help you and your child if you think for a moment of a memory of physical pain. It's easy to remember that when you were hurt or sick you felt terrible. You may vividly remember your emotions of fear and distress. *But once the physical pain is over, you cannot re-create it.* Try it—you really can't. It is simply gone. Our God promises that so it will someday be with all pain, emotional as well as physical. We will remember it no more—or only as something that is gone for ever, for which we thank God. We will join those who, in the words of the hymn, "have forgot their bitter story, in the joy of Jesus' glory."

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Year B
3rd SUNDAY
in
ADVENT



The Bible says that when God comes to his people, it is like a wedding.



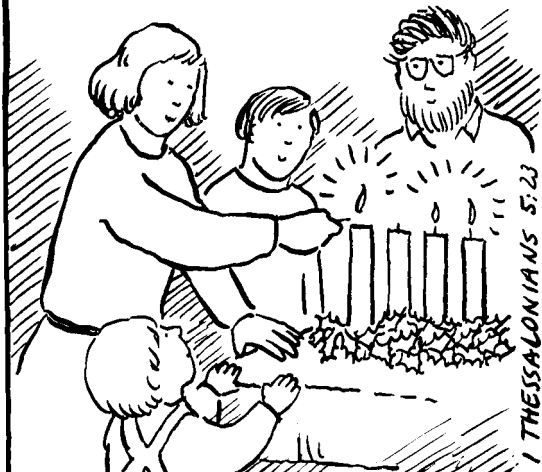
The Bible says that when God comes to his people, it is like a fresh growing garden.



The Bible says that when God comes to his people, it is like being set free from slavery.



The Bible tells us to wait and hope for God to come to us.



Advent is a time for remembering and hoping. We remember the wonderful things that God has already done. And we wait with hope for the new things that God will do.

Under the star, draw a wonderful thing that once happened to you, and a wonderful thing that you are hoping will happen to you some day.

