



December 14, 2008

Dear Parishioners,

This 3rd Sunday of Advent the pink or rose-colored candle on the Advent Wreath is lit. The color is meant to symbolize the joyful hope that ought to define our lives. Personally, I would have chosen instead the color green as a color for hope; or perhaps aquamarine, the color of the sea in those warmer regions of the world! However, what matters is not the candle's color but the hope that ought to color our world no matter how dark and challenging that world becomes at times.

Hope is foundational for Christian faith, for life itself. I believe it was Martin Luther who said that if he knew the world was going to end tomorrow, he'd still plant his three apple trees today. Now, that's hope!

Recently, I was reading an article in the Seattle Times on the current financial crisis we are beginning to weather. The journalist forecasted tough times ahead; yet he added a "silver lining" perspective to each assessment he made. I believe he was trying to cultivate a sense of hope—some might say a false hope—in the midst of a dire situation which is the result of poor policies, lack of vision and greed. I appreciated his "silver lining" because it is hope that always gets us through and gives birth to possibility, even in situations that are impossibly hard. I remember reading an account of a Nazi concentration camp survivor in a journal entry of Thomas Merton. This prisoner dreamt in color, alive with fanciful images of himself being liberated and in flight.

There are in us all seeds of hope growing towards fruition. There is found within the heart of this world a light no darkness can extinguish. This is the meaning of Advent: its promise and its hope.

Father Tim Clank