



Cycle C Adventide Message

Minister Provincial (Africa Province)

Franciscan brothers and sisters in the Third Order of African Province, grace and peace of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you as we solemnly journey through this Advent season under the unceasing COVID-19 pandemic.

The message for this first Sunday of Advent reminds us that the righteousness of God is in the Messiah [Jeremiah 33:16] who we are preparing to welcome into our lives as the redeemer who always hears the prayers of the broken in heart and not as a baby in the manger to be celebrated on Christmas day. We therefore pray with King David [Psalm 25:4] that God make us know his ways and teach us his path i.e., Franciscan spirituality. The Gospel reading of Luke 21:25-36 on this first Sunday of Advent sets the scene and reminds of the need to continue to be spiritually tough and righteously smart as we deal with the social, economic and emotional impact of the pandemic.

Newton's first law (The Law of Inertia) states that if a body is at rest or moving at a constant speed in a straight line, it will remain at rest or keep moving in a straight line at constant speed unless it is acted upon by a force. Drawing from Newton's First Law of Inertia, it can be argued that our spirituality has been consumed by some levels of complacency and we would either stay where we are or to pursue the same direction we are already going. It can further be argued that the opposite of Newton's First Law is REINVENTION - the ability to transform, thus the ability of Franciscans to transform. The ability of the Third Order and us all to transform is the ability of the structures and office bearers to pursue transformation. However, like the Newton's First Law says, "unless it is acted upon by a force," thus, COVID-19 Pandemic as an external force has acted upon our spirituality and the Third Order to transform and can no longer be "business as usual." The Pandemic has created new ways of doing things – calling for new ways of living the Franciscan Spirituality.

Let us be encouraged by the New Testament reading of first Sunday of Advent (1 Thessalonians 3:13) where St Paul encouraged Thessalonians to be strengthened in their hearts in holiness that they and us all, as we go through this Advent season, may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his Saints into our daily lives.

I wish you all a blessed and Holy Spirit fulfilling Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany in Jesus' mighty name.

Pax

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Twum-Darko'.

Brother Michael Twum-Darko tssf
Minister Provincial – African Province