

Fourth Week of Advent -- Hope

(Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve — December 24, 2017)

1st Reader: This is the fourth Sunday in Advent and Christmas Eve. Today, we light the three purple candles and the pink candle. The first Sunday, we lit the candle of peace. On the second Sunday, we lit the candle of love. On the third Sunday, we lit the candle of joy. Today, we light the candle of hope. Advent is a time of waiting and hoping. We wait for the day when we celebrate again the birth of Jesus. We hope that everyone will come to know God and to worship God.

(Light the first, second, third, and fourth candles.)

2nd Reader: When we look at the fourth candle, we remember God's promise. God promised to send a Savior to the people. When we listen to our Scripture reading, we hear what the prophet Isaiah wrote about God. God is the potter who molds us. We know that the gospel witness is one that helps us understand that God is loving and just. God brings peace. This gives us hope. We anticipate again the birth of the baby Jesus, remembering that Jesus helps us know God's love for us.

1st Reader: *(Read Isaiah 64:8)*

Yet, O Lord, you are our Father.

We are the clay, you are the potter;

we are all the work of your hand.

2nd Reader: Think about a potter. A potter takes clay and forms it in a way that is pleasing. That is what God is able to do with each person. We are reminded that we are all the work of God's hands. Each person has been created exactly as God intended them to be, formed to be unique, in a special way. Each with gifts and talents according to God's perfect plan, each with a special plan predestined by God, each with a purpose he made for us to fulfill. We are all God's workmanship created for his pleasure.

Let us Pray:

Heavenly Father, Thank you for your son, Jesus. Thank you for the words of the Prophet Isaiah that remind us that you are the source of our hope. Help us to live each day, allowing you to form us in a way that brings about your kingdom here on earth. Amen.