

Sunday 13th December 2020

Advent, Sunday of 3rd week

Reading: Lk.1,45-55

V.52 *“He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.”*

The coming of God is news that the ‘powerful’ – thrones and rulers – must dread, because it disempowers them; it is news that the humble – the oppressed and ruled over – can greet with joy, because it empowers them.

‘Thrones and rulers’ characterise those who have the say and thereby lord it over those who must and will do as they’re told; they amass to themselves power, might, honours and wealth and thereby make others serve their end. Their power lies in the adoration that their strength and aims receive and in the people’s desire and readiness to bow down before them. What keeps the thrones and rulers going and sustains them, even as they bring destruction and oppression, is that we adore what they represent and bow our knees before it – it owns our desires (= to be enthroned in the kingdom of ‘self’ and to rule in our own authority) and numbs our fear of death.

But break the hold that sin has over our desiring and remove the fear of death for good and thrones and rulers must fall before justice and righteousness. That is why thrones and rulers are terrified of the crib in Bethlehem: For those who bend their knees before that child in adoration and serve him shall be their nemesis and shall inherit the world to come.

Serving the suffering Saviour and following his way, their power through him shall be to rule over sin and over death and by doing what they do *for his sake* to do justice and righteousness. Come, Lord Jesus!