

Revelation 22 and John 17: 20 – 26

'Waiting time'

'You called and cried out loud and shattered my deafness. You were radiant and resplendent, you put to flight my blindness. You were fragrant, and I drew in my breath and now pant after you. I tasted you, and I feel but hunger and thirst for you. You touched me, and I am set on fire to attain the peace which is yours.' So writes Augustine in his 'Confessions', the world's first spiritual autobiography.

These are heartfelt words of longing for God – and Augustine would no doubt echo the **'Come Lord, Jesus!'** at the end of Revelation with equal passion. But what about us? Do we long for God, and for the ultimate and final coming of Christ?

Although we usually think of Advent as the time of the church's year that reminds us of waiting – this Sunday does too. It's between Ascension and Pentecost ... the time of waiting for the first disciples for the coming of the Holy Spirit.

At one level, wouldn't it be great if, in one fell swoop, Jesus the King came in all his power and glory and eliminated all the evil and all the suffering in our world – all the violence, all the poverty, all the sickness, all the damage we've done to our planet? It's right and good that we pray, **'Come Lord Jesus!'** when we look at the mess we're in, both locally and globally.

But even as we anticipate his coming, we can't just sit and twiddle our thumbs. A church poster once proclaimed, **'JESUS IS COMING!'** only for a local graffiti artist to scrawl underneath in spray paint, **'LOOK BUSY!'** As Jesus says in the opening words of today's reading from Revelation: **'See, I am coming soon; my reward is with me, to repay according to everyone's work.'** So rather than bewail the mess we're in, let's keep praying **'Thy Kingdom Come'**, and let's see what small steps we can take, individually and together, to work for the coming of God's kingdom, **'on earth as in heaven.'**

As we work away, the Spirit of Jesus sustains us: **"I in them"** is one of the phrases in our Gospel reading. So, as we anticipate Jesus' final coming for our world, we can respond to his invitation to come to him and drink: he comes to us here and now to satisfy our thirst – and to make us long for more. As Augustine put it, **'I tasted you, and I feel but hunger and thirst for you. You touched me, and I am set on fire to attain the peace which is yours.'**