



## still waters

home church studies

### Psalm 147.12-20 [Worship]

12 Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem! Praise your God, O Zion! 13 For he strengthens the bars of your gates; he blesses your children within you. 14 He grants peace within your borders; he fills you with the finest of wheat. 15 He sends out his command to the earth; his word runs swiftly. 16 He gives snow like wool; he scatters frost like ashes. 17 He hurls down hail like crumbs-- who can stand before his cold? 18 He sends out his word, and melts them; he makes his wind blow, and the waters flow. 19 He declares his word to Jacob, his statutes and ordinances to Israel. 20 He has not dealt thus with any other nation; they do not know his ordinances. Praise the LORD!

#### Consider:

[Think & Pray...]

by Joe Nangle

These January Sundays begin, fittingly, with the prologue of John's gospel, that penetration into the very life and being of God: "In the beginning was [already] the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The passage goes on to announce the great Epiphany of the Word who is God, stating that this person who is with God was made flesh and pitched his tent among us. We cannot exaggerate the magnitude of this assertion. The divine, eternal, omnipresent—God—joins with that which is transitory, mortal, and imperfect—flesh. Because of this incarnation, "of his fullness we have all had a share."

The Hebrew scripture for this day and the reading from Ephesians help us to believe the great good news proclaimed in the gospel. The book of Jeremiah speaks of Israel's return from that horrible and unexpected exile from the promised land. If God can forgive and return the chosen people to their homeland with such a triumphant restoration ("They themselves shall be like watered gardens, never again shall they languish"), can God not raise up humanity itself, in and through the Word made flesh?

Likewise, in the reading from Ephesians, Paul is lavish in his description of our incorporation into Christ. "God chose us in him...to be full of love; he likewise predestined us through Christ Jesus to be his adopted children...."

The negative reality of this is that whole segments of humanity suffer indignities of all sorts. The Word made flesh, who dwelt among us, dignifies every person and is the overriding motivation for the struggle to bring about a world where each person can live a fully human existence.

[Scripture]

### Psalm 72.1-7

Of Solomon.<sup>1</sup> Endow the king with your justice, O God, the royal son with your righteousness. <sup>2</sup> He will judge your people in righteousness, your afflicted ones with justice. <sup>3</sup>

The mountains will bring prosperity to the people, the hills the fruit of righteousness. <sup>4</sup> He will defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy; he will crush the oppressor. <sup>5</sup> He will endure as long as the sun, as long as the moon, through all generations. <sup>6</sup> He will be like rain falling on a mown field, like showers watering the earth. <sup>7</sup> In his days the righteous will flourish; prosperity will abound till the moon is no more.

