

# *Advent Reflections*

*December 5, 2019*



We have heard this reading from Matthew chapter 7 many times, and if you are like me, you concentrate on building your house on solid rock. However, this time I really latched onto the words: “...Everyone who LISTENS to these words of mine and acts on them...”

There is a clear difference between hearing and listening. Hearing is quite simple as compared to listening. When I hear what another says, I literally hear their words and the content. However, I may not hear the layers of emotion or meaning that the individual may be trying to convey. When we truly attend to what another person is saying, we not only hear their words, we are also attentive to their tone of voice, facial expression, anxiety level or their sense of calm. We may also get a sense of what they are not saying.

We spend a lot of time each day hearing what others are saying. This is appropriate. Most of our conversations are functional or casual conversations. However, do we recognize it when the other needs us to truly LISTEN to them? We all need someone at times to not only hear our words, but also to take the time to LISTEN to us.

Jesus also wants us to LISTEN to Him. He wants us to really attend to what He is saying. He wants us to, as St. Benedict said: “LISTEN with our hearts.” When we LISTEN with our hearts, we are fully present to the other person. Today, Jesus is inviting us to LISTEN attentively with the ear of your heart. Will we take the time and give Him the attention he desires?

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**Reading 1**     [IS 26:1-6](#)

On that day they will sing this song in the land of Judah:

"A strong city have we;  
he sets up walls and ramparts to protect us.  
Open up the gates  
to let in a nation that is just,  
one that keeps faith.  
A nation of firm purpose you keep in peace;  
in peace, for its trust in you."

Trust in the LORD forever!  
For the LORD is an eternal Rock.  
He humbles those in high places,  
and the lofty city he brings down;  
He tumbles it to the ground,  
levels it with the dust.  
It is trampled underfoot by the needy,  
by the footsteps of the poor.

**Responsorial Psalm**     [PS 118:1 AND 8-9, 19-21, 25-27A](#)

R.(26a) **Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

or:

R. **Alleluia.**

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,  
for his mercy endures forever.

It is better to take refuge in the LORD  
than to trust in man.

It is better to take refuge in the LORD  
than to trust in princes.

R. **Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

or:

R. **Alleluia.**

Open to me the gates of justice;  
I will enter them and give thanks to the LORD.

This gate is the LORD's;  
the just shall enter it.

I will give thanks to you, for you have answered me  
and have been my savior.

R. **Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

or:

R. **Alleluia.**

O LORD, grant salvation!  
O LORD, grant prosperity!  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD;  
we bless you from the house of the LORD.  
The LORD is God, and he has given us light.  
**R. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**  
or:  
**R. Alleluia.**

**Alleluia**      [IS 55:6](#)

**R. Alleluia, alleluia.**  
Seek the LORD while he may be found;  
call him while he is near.  
**R. Alleluia, alleluia.**

**Gospel**      [MT 7:21, 24-27](#)

Jesus said to his disciples:  
"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,'  
will enter the Kingdom of heaven,  
but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven.

"Everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them  
will be like a wise man who built his house on rock.  
The rain fell, the floods came,  
and the winds blew and buffeted the house.  
But it did not collapse; it had been set solidly on rock.  
And everyone who listens to these words of mine  
but does not act on them  
will be like a fool who built his house on sand.  
The rain fell, the floods came,  
and the winds blew and buffeted the house.  
And it collapsed and was completely ruined."