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24 Wednesday [Morning]

WEDNESDAY 4<sup>th</sup> Week of Advent

2 Sam 7: 1 – 5, 8 - 12, 14, 16

Ps 88: 2 – 5, 27, 29

Luke 1: 67 - 79

“The dawn from on high shall break upon us”. The words are from Zechariah’s hymn of praise to God, a prophecy (St Luke says) on the birth of his son John. In the darkness of tonight’s midnight, and in the dawn light of tomorrow morning, we celebrate Christmas. It’s a festival of light, of Christ who is the Light of the world and who shines on “those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace”. Over the past weeks we’ve been prepared for this dawn through the figure and the words of Isaiah, the person of John the Baptist whose voice called in the wilderness, the presence of Mary to whom the archangel brought such astounding news, the welcoming of Elizabeth who recognised the new life of Life itself. And now “the appointed time has come; God has sent His Son into the world”. May His coming this year be a real new dawn for each of us, and for our world and our different societies. It’s a world that has a lot of darkness, fears and sorrows, want and hunger and suffering, despite outward appearances of jollity and fun and the bright and noisy ‘commercial’ ways of celebrating Christmas. May His dawn shed light into the dark corners of all our lives and fears. When we hear and sing of peace this Christmastime, may it be the peace that He came to bring, with His light to guide our feet. May this dawn always be new and fresh for us as we celebrate Jesus Christ, the Light of the world.

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