Spirituality
Pencil Preaching



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“The rain fell, the floods came, the winds blew and buffeted the house” (Matt 7:24).

Is 26:1-6; *Matt 7:21, 24-27*

Anyone who has purchased an older home has first looked at the foundation, walls and doors. A house becomes a home when we feel secure within it. So it was in the ancient world, where survival depended on the walls and gates of a city and the stability of a family dwelling. Many of Jesus’ parables deal with securing a house for the night and opening gates to welcome some, closing gates to keep others out. Even the image of the Kingdom of God uses the idea of gates. Who will enter and who will be left outside?

Today’s Gospel speaks of the importance of living God’s Word, not just thinking about it or mouthing its importance. Those who hear the Word and act on it are like homeowners who have built their dwellings on rock, not sand. When trials come -- the winds, rains and storms of life – they stand firm. Those who have never made a commitment or integrated their beliefs into their actual lives collapse when crisis hits.

Advent is a good time to do a thorough inspection of our foundations, walls and gates. Would we buy the house we have become? Would anyone want to enter the dwelling our values and commitments have established? Are we a place where strangers and pilgrims, the lost and homeless, might stop, come in out of the storm to warm themselves, feel safe, be fed and given a bed?

Only a secure house makes a confident householder free enough and capable of being that generous with their personal space. Such is the house of God that Jesus preached and was himself the model for. If we prepare our lives by receiving and living his word, he will already be present when Christmas comes.