

Q

*What significance does the Advent season have for our Christian faith journey?*

A

Advent is a season of joyful anticipation and expectation. But for what specifically? Certainly not for the birth of the Christ Child—that occurred more than two thousand years ago. This season links us with all those who lived in the era of longing for the coming of the Messiah. But he has come and lived among us.

Then what are we joyfully anticipating and expecting?

Some are joyfully anticipating the many gifts that they will buy and share with others, along with the many gifts they will receive in return. Others enter into the overblown commercialism—decorating, partying, writing cards, and all the endless customs that go with the season.

What if the anticipation and expectation were to focus on how we can continue to make present the living Christ in each and every moment of our daily lives? Yes, Jesus came among us two thousand years ago. But how do we continue to make that presence real in our world? Jesus himself set the agenda for us. We are to proclaim good news to the poor, liberty to captives, sight to the blind, provide food for the hungry, shelter for the homeless, freedom for those who are oppressed and abused. What would the Advent season look like if this, rather than materialism, was the main focus of our joyful anticipation and expectation? Try it and see what results. It may surprise all of us.