

REFLECTION - 1st SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE CALL TO KNOW GOD

Isaiah Chapter 1

The Ox and the Ass

Listen, O heavens, earth attend, for the Lord is speaking:

“I have reared children and brought them up but they have rebelled against me.

The ox knows its master, and the ass its master’s crib;

but Israel does not know, my people do not understand.”

They have abandoned the Lord, despised the Holy One of Israel, they have turned away from him...the whole head is sick, the whole heart is diseased,,

Wash, make yourselves clean...learn to do good;

search for justice, discipline the violent; defend the orphan, plead for the widow.

“Come now, let us talk this over”. says the Lord “though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.”

In the Book of Isaiah chapter 1 the prophet informs us that the ox knows its master and the ass knows its master’s crib but he questions whether the people of Israel know their God. They fulfil their religious duties, they pay their tithes to the Temple but do they know God? Do their actions show that they know a loving and merciful God?

The crib is both a catechical aid for teaching children and a prophetic call to all to take seriously our need to know God: to know the love and mercy of God. Once we allow ourselves to be transformed by that love and mercy, we are called to help transform the lives of others with love and mercy, especially the lives of the broken and the poor.

