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*“The great spiritual question the season poses for each of us is,
which ‘coming’ are you and I waiting for now?”*

~ Sister Joan Chittister

We are in the season of Advent, the beginning of the Christian liturgical year. In her book “The Liturgical Year”, Sister Joan Chittister invites us to look at Advent as the most profound season of the Christian calendar. She writes “The church year does not start here because Christmas is coming. The church year starts here to remind us why Jesus was born in the first place. Most of all, it starts here to call us to determine why we ourselves are here at all.”

That is a powerful statement – why are we here? Advent calls us to ponder that question. It’s a time in which we prepare, we look deeply how we are expressing as the divine. We listen for what is next for us individually, as we are being born anew as well. We are being called into relationship with Spirit to give birth to what Christians call Christ among us. The name doesn’t matter – call it divine energy, creative mind, universal power.

The metaphor of Advent is one of birth, and our call to transformation invites us to expand it. The 14th century mystic Meister Eckhart wrote “what is the good of Mary giving birth to the son of God 2000 years ago, if I do not give birth to God today? We are all mothers of God, for God is always needing to be born.” The holy is born through us.

The call to incarnational spirituality brings us far beyond a season in which we celebrate the birth of one infant two thousand years ago. We are not cheerleaders for an event long over, but are participants in the ongoing birthing of the holy right now. Advent, and Christmas, are celebrations, yes, but are also calls to action.

Does that idea resonate with you? How do we give birth to God today?

Feminist theologian Grace Jantzen suggests that Jesus’ message is that we shift our focus to a question of human flourishing, not suffering, and to this world, not the next. What would Christianity look like if we shifted our focus from Jesus’s death to his birth? From suffering to flourishing?

What would Christian spirituality look like to you if the paradigm changed to a focus on Jesus’ life instead of his death?

Let’s go back to the question above. Which ‘coming’ are you and I waiting for now?