

## Prepare the way of the Lord : An Adventure for the Church

Eugene Cullen Kennedy, professor emeritus of psychology, at Loyola University, Chicago explores the power of the human imagination and its relationship to religion, saying that “the object of religion is the imagination, that’s a deep and inexhaustible font of our understanding - symbolizing our deepest possibilities.” Kennedy stresses that St. Pope John XXIII challenged the Church through the Second Vatican Council to understand that the human imagination reveals the “wonders and awe of our existence.”

Kennedy further notes that “Pope Francis understands that faith should quicken our imagination and make us aware of the God who loves us as a father and does not look down on us as a judge.” Again Kennedy says, “Religion



allows the imagination to support, strengthen, and open us to the joy of life every day.” When religion means living in dread of God, fearing that God will be mad at you, it betrays Jesus’ own words, “I have come to bring life; to the fullest.” Religion is not meant to “be harsh, demanding, and a

source of punishment,” but “rather a place of understanding and forgiveness,” calling us to the possibilities of unconditional love and an unbounded forgiveness.

As we celebrate this Advent season, may our loving and forgiving God become an experience within our daily life, the Emmanuel (God with Us); that constant presence of love within each image and likeness that we call the human person.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation can be an opportunity to reconcile and heal those areas of our life that do not reflect the love and forgiveness of God in our dealings with one another, as well as our perceptions of ourselves, and the joy that religion should bring to us while experiencing the **ADVENT - URE** we call life. LGaetano.