

## **Reflection for the Second Sunday of Advent**

Beloved brothers and sisters,

We walk through Advent, this time of watchful waiting and active hope. On this second Sunday, the liturgy invites us to focus our attention on the promise of a new world, inaugurated by the One who comes: the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

### **1. The shoot that is born from the stump of Jesse (Is 11:1–10)**

The first reading presents a beautiful image:

“A branch shall come forth from the stump of Jesse, and a shoot shall sprout from his roots.”

After so much infidelity and violence in Israel, the stump seemed dead. But God surprises: from what seemed sterile a new life is born. This new life is the Kingdom of God that Jesus Christ will make present in our history. It is in this God that we place our hope, because also in our personal and community history it so often seems that “death reigns,” but God makes hope arise where we see only limitation, sin, and weariness.

The prophet describes the Messiah full of the Spirit: the spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, and fear of God. He is the King who judges with justice, who defends the poor, who brings forth peace. And he invites us also to let the Spirit of God penetrate our life and make each one of us a builder of the Kingdom of God, on the paths of peace and justice, without becoming discouraged, placing our hope in God.

2. As the responsorial psalm we have Psalm 71 (72), which sings the reign of the Messiah: as a reign of justice for the little ones, liberation for the oppressed, compassion for the poor. The fruit of this just government is the peace that covers the world like the fruitful rain that falls upon the grass.

In a society so marked by injustices and divisions, we are invited to welcome the way Christ reigns: not with force, but with meekness, truth, and mercy.

### **3. Unity and hope (Rom 15:4–9)**

In the second reading, Saint Paul recalls that everything that was written in the Scriptures was to nourish us in perseverance and hope. And he asks that we have “the same mind toward one another.”

Advent is not only preparing the heart individually, but preparing together, as a community.

Paul also reminds that Christ came not only for Israel, but so that all peoples may glorify God. In a time of so many cultural and identity conflicts, the Gospel calls us to reconciliation, openness, and encounter.

### **4. John the Baptist: Prepare the way (Mt 3:1–12)**

In the Gospel there appears to us the figure of John the Baptist, an austere figure, in the desert, with a direct appeal:

“Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near.”

He is the voice that awakens a comfortable people. He denounces hypocrisy, criticizes false religious security, and calls all — Pharisees, Sadducees, simple people — to bear fruits of conversion.

Advent is a time of concrete conversion. It is not enough to say “Lord, Lord”; it is necessary to change attitudes, reconcile oneself, abandon vices, repair ruptures, heal resentments.

John also announces the Christ who comes with the Holy Spirit and with fire:

- Spirit, which gives life, which creates new life;
- Fire, which purifies, which eliminates what is empty and sterile.

Let us ask ourselves: What does God ask of us today?

On this Sunday, the Word invites us to three movements:

a) To wait with active hope

Like Israel, we also cross deserts. But God makes life sprout where it seems impossible. Let us trust in the Lord, despite the situations of death with which we are confronted in our world.

b) To build justice and peace

This building begins with small choices: calmer words, gestures of reconciliation, listening, generosity.

c) To truly convert ourselves

It is not enough to say, "I have faith"; it is important that our life shows the faith we say we have. Let us seek a coherent life, in accordance with the teachings of Jesus Christ. He is our guide, our strength, and light.

Let us ask the Lord to give us a heart docile to the Spirit, capable of receiving His peace, transforming itself and transforming the world around us.

May Mary, Mother of Hope, accompany us on this path.

AMEN.