

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 4, 2022

Gospel: (Matthew 3:1-12)

John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the desert of Judea and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!” It was of him that the prophet Isaiah had spoken when he said: “A voice of one crying in the desert, Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths”....At that time Jerusalem, all Judea, and the whole region around the Jordan were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the Jordan as they acknowledge their sins.... John announced, “I am baptizing you with water, for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is mightier than I. I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in his hand. He will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

Reflection:

John the Baptist is prophet, judge, precursor. With these three roles we note a parallel with the prophetic, kingly, and priestly roles in Israel that come to fulfillment in Jesus Christ. John is the bridge between Israel of old and Jesus the Messiah. John forcefully reminds us that vindication or punishment is our choice, according to the life we lead. Who is this strange man John? He is the voice that cries out to us an Advent message: “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!” For those of us who are totally taken up with the present moment—simply getting up, getting to work, keeping the house and preparing meals, etc.—it may seem strange to live in light of a future event. The beginning of Advent is a time when the Church reminds us that *how we do* these everyday things is how we bear fruit and receive everlasting life. (Living Liturgy, p. 10)

Vincentian Meditation:

John knew the Advent secret: He focused his whole life on the coming of Jesus. “I am not the Christ. Another comes after me. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.” He realized that his all-consuming vocation was to prepare the way of the Lord. Our vocation is very similar. St. Vincent tells us that the person of Jesus must be absolutely central in our lives, as it was for John the Baptist. As Vincentians we dedicate our whole lives to following Christ. We seek to share in his love and reverence for the Father and his compassionate and effective love for the poor. With him we trust in God’s Providence, which rules over all. For Vincentians, as for John the Baptist, there is nothing else but Jesus. (Maloney, Seasons in Spirituality, p.47)

Discussion: (*Share thoughts on the readings after a moment of silence*)

How does Advent call you to “prepare the way of the Lord?”

Closing Prayer:

Come Lord Jesus, give us the grace to,
-**keep Jesus absolutely central in our lives.**
Come Lord Jesus, give us the grace to,
-**prepare the way of the Lord.**
Come Lord Jesus, give us the grace to,
-**bring love and compassion to the poor and the forgotten. Amen**



Mk 1:8

I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.