



LECTIO DIVINA II SUNDAY OF ADVENT CYCLE C

Reus (Spain), Sr. ANA ISABEL PÉREZ, December 5, 2021.- "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight... and all flesh shall see the salvation of God" (Lk 3, 4-6)

During this Advent season in which we begin the second week according to the liturgical calendar, we have the possibility to continue our journey towards to One who will come to visit us.

The exclamation Come Lord Jesus! that we so often proclaim, is an invitation to be awake, to go towards Jesus who will give us His light and will shine from the simplicity of a manger. However, he does not come only on a great day, he comes as long as we open our hearts to welcome Him because he comes to stay in our lives. Let us continue waiting for him as we prepare ourselves walking through the path that He will lead us.

"ADVENT is a waiting time in joy and hope. ADVENT is a time to strengthen our certainty that we do not journey alone, there is SOMEONE who came... is coming... and will come giving to our history a "presence thread" ... What He said and now He fulfills it: "I will be with you always to the end of the age". What better certainty for the moments of restlessness, what better certainty when the clouds make us think that the "sun" is gone, when we think "alone" that no one is caring for us. Let us rekindle our FAITH and let us continue on the path... "on the way" to share faith and hope with those who are crying out for it and deeply desire it." (Fr. Álvaro Restrepo).

HOLY SPIRIT INVOCATION

Come Holy Spirit,
come into our life, into our hearts.
Move our intelligence and our will,
to understand what the Father wants to tell us through his Son Jesus, the Christ.

May your Word come into our whole life and become life in us. Amen

- Song (Spanish): “Dios de Pentecostés” (Pablo Martínez)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G3dabo6gFVw>

GOSPEL

Luke 3: 1- 6

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah:

"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God'"

REFLECTION OF THE TEXT

The Gospel passage for the second week of Advent presents John the Baptist, who is a prophet and appears in the desert to prepare the way for the Lord. Many centuries ago, people were waiting for the Messiah, but the oppressive Roman domination made people to increase their desire of the Liberator's coming, the Savior. The appearance of John the Baptist in the desert was a sign that God was visiting His people again! Redemption was nearer! Luke's intention is to put the apparition of John the Baptist into the political-social context and the religious context at that time. On the political-social context, Tiberius is the Emperor, Pontius Pilate is governor of Judea, Herod is the ruler of Galilee, Annas and Caiaphas are the high priests. Then, through a biblical text, Luke places John in the religious context of God's plan, saying that he has come to prepare the realization of the secular hopes of the Messiah's coming.

Luke has some original aspects in presenting the John the Baptist's preaching which allow us to better grasp his message. First of all, he highlights the event of grace of the "word" that

comes to him: "the Word of God came to John in the desert". The desert, in Mark, appears as the place where the divine Word comes to man, making him a prophet.

To the "event" of the Word Luke prefixes a historical picture with a very solemn tone: "*In the fifteenth year of the emperor Tiberius Caesar...*" (vv. 1-2). (vv. 1-2). This page is not only important in itself, but also because it frames the outpouring of the Word on the Baptist, and when the Word of God comes, human history becomes salvation history.

Luke then distinguishes the two places where the Baptist acts: the "desert" and the "Jordan". The desert is the place where he "receives" the Word; the Jordan is the place where he proclaims this Word to others, inviting them to conversion. Having heard the Word of God in the desert, John can make his invitation resound as an offer of salvation to all.

"All flesh will see the salvation of God" (Lk 3:6) God truly desires to reach everyone.

MEDITATION

Take a time of prayerful silence, so that the Word of God may enter us and illuminate our lives. Let us be docile instruments in God's hands. It is He who guides our history.

"THEY SHALL SEE THE SALVATION OF GOD"

The words of the prophet Isaiah: "***Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths smooth***", is an invitation to open our hearts and welcome the salvation that God offers us unceasingly, because he wants us all free from the slavery of sin...And salvation is offered to every man, every people, without exception, to each one of us.

With John the Baptist, today we are invited to cry out our faith in the desert of the human heart so that a call to conversion will resound in it and, therefore, a call to hope. God is coming, God is... God is with us.

John did not choose to be a preacher, it was God who chose him; John did not choose what he had to say, God gave him the word, the message and the teaching; John did not seek the applause of men, he simply prepared the way for the Savior. John prepared hearts to be open to the Lord; he announced conversion, to change the way of living, to be baptized and to obtain the forgiveness of sins and to straighten the way.

It is a call to be freer and happier. A call to get ready to receive the Lord and to prepare ourselves for the birth of Jesus in our hearts.

A few questions to deepen our understanding of this Word of Salvation:

1. *Do I understand that God has a plan of Salvation, which includes all of us? What does Salvation mean to me?*
2. *Do I understand that Christ will return at the end of time? Therefore, what does the phrase "prepare the way of the Lord" say to me? Do I prepare this way, through which the Lord will pass?*
3. *Does the proclamation of the Gospel also invite me to change?*

PRAYER

To pray is to respond to the Lord who speaks to us first. Let us listen to His Word of Salvation.

PSALM OF THE WORD...

*You are, Lord,
The Word of life,
Which is spoken in silence,
and it is in silence
that must be received.*

*Make it germinate
in our hearts
as Good News,
to all men.*

*Your Word, Lord
gives us life.
Therefore, I trust in you,
though I walk slowly
and in dark places,
I do not fear,
for your Word
is light on my path.*

*Your Word, Lord
is ever new,
food for my soul.*

*Therefore, it is sweet to my palate
and tastes of love
when I proclaim it
from my poor life. Amen. (F. Cerro)*

CONTEMPLATION

Repeat several times this verse of the Gospel so that it may enter into our life, into our heart:
"Prepare the way of the Lord...".

"Almighty and eternal God, stir up in us the desire for a true conversion, so that, renewed by the Holy Spirit, we may make present in every human relationship that justice and peace which the Incarnation of your Son made flourish on earth. Through Jesus Christ our Lord..."