

## The 2nd Sunday of Advent - Year A – December 7, 2025 – Msgr. Peter Quang Nguyen

### Summary of The Readings:

**First Reading – Isaiah 11:1-10:** The branch from Jesse brings justice and peace, uniting the world under God's spirit. Nature is restored, and the earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord.

**Responsorial Psalm – Psalm 72:** The king will rule with justice and fairness, bringing lasting peace. He will help the poor and needy. His name will be blessed forever, and all nations will find joy in him.

**Second Reading – Romans 15:4-9:** The Scriptures teach us endurance and hope. God helps us to live in harmony and glorify Him together. Christ serves Jews and Gentiles, confirming God's promises and mercy.

**Gospel – Matthew 3:1-12:** John the Baptist preached repentance in Judea. He baptized many in the Jordan, warning Pharisees and Sadducees to produce good fruit. He announced one mightier who will baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire.

My Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

John the Baptist in today's Gospel calls us to play an essential role by living lives of repentance, conversion, and renewal, thereby preparing the way for the Lord's return, the "*second coming*" of Christ.

We prepare for the coming of Christ by allowing God to be reborn each day in our lives: renewing our lives through prayer, self-denial, and sharing our blessings with others. The German mystic Angelus Silesius said: "*Christ may be born a thousand times in Bethlehem – but all is in vain until He is born in me.*"

Let us begin where we are, where we live, where we work, where we worship, where we serve. John the Baptist calls for righteousness and social awareness. We must renounce selfish greed and consumerism. Let us prepare to live with the hope of Jesus' return. Following the advice of St. John, the Baptist, let us celebrate: the first coming of God – through the Second Person of the Trinity, may Jesus be born in our lives, – and live awaiting His "*return*" on the last day.

Let us remember that the Holy Mass is the most powerful prayer because it transforms us into people who live according to the love and life of the Eucharist, bringing the living presence of Jesus into our hearts and His divine life into our souls.

Let us read the Word of God, pray the Rosary daily, and fast once a week throughout the year, not just during Advent and Lent. We can spend some time before Mass adoring Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, and we should practice forgiving those who offend us.

Finally, let us share our love with others through selfless and humble service: "*Do small things with great love.*"

Saint John the Baptist, before preaching at the Jordan River, himself "lived" in silence in the desert for many years. He prepared the way for the Lord within himself first. John straightened the path of the Lord to his own heart before urging others to do the same. This is also what Jesus did; He went into the desert for 40 days before beginning His public preaching/teaching/healing/ ministry. Similarly, before living out the faith we have received, we must ourselves be transformed before speaking to others about the need for transformation (repentance).

Furthermore, let us take an example from today's Gospel of Matthew that introduces us to a figure who is considered a bridge between the Old and New Testaments: Saint John the Baptist. He is the forerunner who prepared the way for Jesus' coming through his preaching and witness.

**Witnessing through preaching.** Quoting the prophet Isaiah, the evangelist Matthew affirms that Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled in the person of the Lord's forerunner, Saint John the Baptist: "A voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'"

How many rough places of wicked and cruel words; rough places of laziness and unwillingness to strive for self-improvement; rough places of unconstructive criticism. How many high hills of pride, always wanting to boast and exalt oneself; mountains of self-love that do not know how to admit fault and do not know how to forgive. How many deep pits of greed wanting to seize everything, wanting to hoard everything for oneself; deep pits of division, always causing discord, always resentment, always envy, always suspicion; deep pits of passion chasing after fame, fortune, and pleasure. How many winding paths of deceit, dishonesty with God, with others, and even with oneself; winding paths of shirking responsibility and hypocrisy.

With this preaching, Saint John the Baptist did not hesitate to speak frankly about the state of those who listened to his preaching and came to receive baptism. Through his preaching, Saint John the Baptist showed that all those rough places, winding paths, high hills, and deep pits prevented God from coming to us. Therefore, we must level the hills of pride and self-love, fill in the deep pits of discord, straighten the winding paths of deceit, and smooth out the rough places of wickedness ... **To prepare our hearts to welcome the Lord.**

**Witnessing through actions.** Not only did Saint John the Baptist witness to Jesus through words, but he also witnessed through actions, that is, through his virtuous and holy life. The saint is a model of humility when he acknowledges that he is not worthy to carry the sandals of Jesus who came after him. John the Baptist considered himself merely a voice crying in the wilderness, a forerunner preparing the way for the Lord. Through his words and actions, Saint John the Baptist fulfilled his mission as a witness to the Savior.

Therefore, for each of us, to prepare for the coming of the Lord (*His glorious return*), we need to know and to commit: to elevate our souls and live a holy life worthy of our high status as children of God, humbly acknowledging our true selves, and being honest in everything we do. Let us stay away from obstacles that distance us from God, such as fame, wealth, and lust. In particular, let everyone become a "*forerunner*" for the Savior, meaning that through our way of life, others will recognize God and return to Him.

*Lord Jesus, grant us the grace to elevate our souls and live a holy life, and also to humbly acknowledge our true selves and be honest in everything we do, so that we may become true "forerunners" of the Lord, preparing the hearts of all people to await the coming of the Lord to save humanity. Amen.*