

Dominica II Adventus A

Lectio Divina by Fr. Randy Soto

I. Lectio

A. In the first reading we read of an important prophesy made by Isaiah about future the king of Israel. This oracle along with Is 7:14; 9:1-6 seem to belong to the liturgy of coronation of the messiah-king of Israel; therefore, it is very difficult to pin down its historical nucleus. On the other hand, the future tense of the verb enables us to read this oracle with the eyes of the New Testament. Jesus Christ is the only Messiah-King that can fit the shoes of the description made by Isaiah.

B. The hope for a new Messiah is echoed in Ps 72 when it proclaims: "*Justice shall flourish in his time and fullness of peace forever.*"

C. In Christ, not just the Jews, but all nations have access to salvation and redemption. St. Paul is resolved to exhort the community of Rome to live in unity, for he interprets that all promises made by God to the Patriarchs are only fulfilled in Christ Jesus. Only Christ can bring unity and peace to all the nations.

D. Matthew's Gospel presents today the Testimony of John the Baptist in the desert of Judah. JB points out that the real Messiah, Jesus Christ, will baptize us with Holy Spirit and fire. In the presence of such event we are called to repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

III. Meditatio

A. The "*Virga Iesse*" announced by Isaiah has been confirmed by the testimony of JB. We are called to be part of this kingdom inaugurated by Christ. In Baptism, Jesus bestows upon us the Holy Spirit which like comes into us to purify our infirmities and to heal our wounds. This transformation makes of us new creatures in Christ. Thus we are called to repent, for the new times of the New Messiah require that we be reconciled in order to give fitting worship to the Father.

B. Other themes: Creation vis-à-vis New Creation (Isaiah); promise-fulfillment (Rom); repentance and conversion of the heart (Gospel); John the Baptist (Gospel).

III. Oratio

We begin our celebration by quoting Isaiah saying: "the Lord will come to save all nations, and your hearts will exult to hear his majestic voice" (*Introit*); then we ask God to remove the things that hinder us from receiving Christ with joy, so that we may share his wisdom and become one with him when he comes in glory (*OP*); we present the gifts to the altar by singing: "*Will you not instead give us life; and shall not your people rejoice in you? Show us, O Lord, your kindness, and grant us your salvation*" (*OA*); we also pray that God may sustain us with his mercy, and that he may receive our prayers and

offerings (PG); with prophet Baruch we declare: “Rise up, Jerusalem, stand on the heights, and see the joy that is coming to you from God” (CA). Finally, we pray that “by our sharing in this mystery, teach us to judge wisely the things of earth and to love the things of heaven” (PC).

III. Contemplatio

Jordanis ora praevia

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
Announces that the Lord is nigh;
Awake and hearken, for he brings
Glad tidings of the King of kings.

Then cleansed be ev'ery heart from sin
Make straight the way of God within;
O let us all our hearts prepare
For Christ to come and enter there

For you are man's salvation, Lord,
Our refuge and our great reward;
Once more upon your people shine,
And fill the world with love divine.

To God the Son all glory be,
Whose advent set all nations free,
whom with the Father we adore,
And Holy Spirit ever more.

Author: Charles Coffin (1736), translated by John Chandler (1837)
Liturgy of the Hours, Volume I, 121.