

Homily – Monday of the First Week of Advent CTSA Televised Mass – December 2, 2024

As we begin this Advent season, we are reminded that God’s love and the seeds of His Word are present in all peoples and in every person. From the beginning of time, the Holy Spirit has prepared the world for the coming of Jesus. Even in our own hearts, the Holy Spirit stirs within us a desire for truth, goodness, beauty, and unity. These are signs that God is at work, drawing us closer to His Son, preparing his coming.

In today’s readings, the prophet Isaiah paints a vision of hope and restoration. He speaks of the Messiah as the Lord’s offspring, rooted in God’s promises, and destined to lead His people toward salvation. This imagery reminds us that Advent is not just a season of waiting but of preparation. Just as God prepared the world for the coming of His Son, we too must prepare our hearts for His arrival into every aspect of our lives.

The Gospel gives us the example of the Roman centurion, a man of deep faith and humility. Though he was not part of Israel, he recognized the power of Jesus’ Word. *“Lord, I am not worthy to have you enter under my roof; only say the word and my servant will be healed.”* This man’s witness to the work of the Holy Spirit reverberates in the Communion Rite in every Mass.

Pope Francis has pointed out that even Jesus marvels at the centurion’s words. (quote) *“He is struck by the centurion’s great humility, by his meekness. (...) Given his troubles, the centurion might have been anxious and could have demanded to be heard, making his authority felt. He could have insisted and even forced Jesus to come to his house. Instead, he was modest, unassuming,*

and meek; he did not raise his voice or make a fuss. He acted, perhaps without even being aware of it, like God himself, who is 'meek and humble of heart' (Mt 11:29)."(end of quote).

Advent invites us to nurture this kind of faith, which witnesses to the life of the Spirit. The Word of God, like seeds, needs fertile soil to grow in our hearts. The centurion's faith blossomed because he trusted completely in Jesus' love and power. Like him, we are called to walk in the light of the Lord, allowing His Word to guide our steps and inspire our actions.

Isaiah's vision of peace – where swords are turned into plowshares – reminds us that the Messiah comes not just to restore us individually, but to bring peace and unity to the world. This peace begins when we open our hearts to Jesus, allowing Him to transform us and teach us to love one another as He loves us.

This Advent, let us ask Our Lady of Guadalupe to help us follow the centurion's example: approach the Lord with humility, trust in His Word, and prepare our hearts to welcome Him anew. May our journey lead us closer to the Prince of Peace, who brings light to the darkness and hope to all nations.