

Second Sunday of Advent - 12-07-2025

“He shall strike the ruthless with the rod of his mouth and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked.”

“You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?”

Not the most pleasant thing to hear on a Sunday of Advent as we prepare for Christmas, but these are the words of the prophet Isaiah who foretold the first coming of the messiah and of John the Baptist who prepared the way for him.

So, we can't just ignore what these holy men had to say to the people of their time because they are also speaking to us today.

Isaiah was chiefly addressing the kings of the house of David who were supposed to lead the people of Israel in the way of holiness. However, they weren't always in keeping with the word of God and misled many along the way.

John the Baptist directed his scathing words primarily to the religious leaders of his time, many of whom were just using religion to serve their own interests. They laid heavy burdens on people's shoulders but wouldn't lift a finger to help them carry it.

Many of these kings and religious leaders were proud men who weren't living according to the law of God. They were living something more worldly.

So, perhaps someone might be tempted to think, well that's a problem for religious and political leaders, not for me. I don't have anything to worry about because I'm neither a king nor a religious leader.

But that's not exactly true. As baptized Catholics we have been made sharers in Jesus' ministry as priest, prophet and king.

In other words, like the priests, prophets, and kings of old, we have been called and chosen to prepare ourselves and others for the final coming of the messiah.

So, we need to take the messages of the Prophet Isaiah and John the Baptist seriously. In other words, we need to take our calling very seriously.

Are we genuinely striving to conform our lives to the traditional teachings of the Catholic Church?

Are we trying to follow the examples of the holy men and women – the saints of the Church – who preceded us?

Or have we adopted certain modern practices or ideas that are contrary to the traditional teachings of the Faith? Have we instead conformed our lives to the ways of the world?

The Son of God came once in time, over two thousand years ago as a vulnerable baby, born to die so that we could live – a merciful savior – but when he returns, he will come, not as the merciful savior but as the just judge.

So, we need to prepare ourselves and one another for this final coming of the messiah.

To that end Jesus comes to us in many little ways every day. He comes to us gently to soften our hearts to live for him in this life so that when comes the final time we will be ready to greet him like little children on a Christmas morning.

This is what we should be anticipating during this Advent season as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Christmas is a soft reminder that Jesus, the just judge, is coming but he will not be crucified second time.

Now, I'm really not here to spoil anyone's Christmas joy. But I'm here to remind all of us that despite what the world may be signaling to us, Advent is not Christmas.

It's a penitential season to help us prepare for Jesus' final coming. So, let's take advantage of it while we still have time.