

Blessed Trinity Catholic Community + Spirit of Christ Mission

Homily—The Second Sunday of Advent-A - December 7, 2025

Isaiah 11:1-10; Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17; Romans 15:409; Matthew 3:1-12

Homily - Father Ed Hislop

What a wondrous vision, tremendous hope, and life changing encouragement. *“Not by appearance shall he judge, nor by hearsay shall he decide. He will judge the poor with justice and decide aright for the lands afflicted, he shall strike the ruthless...”*

Words of hope, but true deeds to be done for those who claim to wait in joyful hope for the new birth of Christ into the realities, dreams and struggles of our world. Could it be true that Isaiah is describing the struggle, harm, affliction, hatred and violence being done without retribution or challenge in our day?

Could it be true that his vision is our work, work to be aware, work to care, work to speak and challenge, and work to change both mind and heart. Day by day the destruction, dismantling, fear, and a “ruthless” “rounding up” continues; all done in our name. Rash judgement and “hearsay,” happens so frequently that it almost seems normal or even deserved, while the separations and divisions, based on “appearance,” grow so familiar that it is no longer “news.”

Many, struggling with their one concerns and life challenges, are tempted to stop listening, watching or feeling the ruthless deeds done to so many, especially to those who are perceived as “different,” or foreign. Some grow weary of hearing the stories, seeing the fear and observing the violence. Often many feel helpless or succumb to the feeling that “there is nothing I can do—it does not affect me or my family;” or have discerned that these violent actions have little or nothing to do with faith or with the Gospel of Christ. We know it, we see it, we feel it as we grow weary.

Yet still, deep in our soul, we long for good judgement, true justice genuine compassion, and hearty hospitality for the lowly and the poor, for

the foreigner, migrant and refugee. Our heart, our true Catholic heart, is still filled with a mission to save people, burning with a genuine reverence for life, in every circumstance, and with a true longing for justice and reconciliation.

So, into this world, this nation, this community, through the darkness, a quiet, flickering light passes and then there is uttered something ancient yet ever new: a vision, a fiery hope and a longed-for promise, even in great loss, fear or despair: *“Not by appearance shall he judge nor by hearsay shall he decide. He shall judge with justice and decide aright for the lands afflicted.”*

The vision will be a signal for all the nations, and *“people of every race, language and way of life will seek it out.”* The vision is believers speaking for justice, seeing the truth; the vision is those who claim to follow Christ embracing neighbors—the so-called “gentiles”—from every place, who see the light and the promise of justice and welcome. They will come from every place.

The vision is the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus Christ, as news for today and a call to act now. Paul reminds us again, as our advent journey continues, that our work during these terrible days, is to endure and to think in harmony with Christ. We are, he says, to *“welcome one another, as Christ has welcomed us.”* To welcome is first to be aware, to listen, to learn, to hope, and to see every violation of a neighbor as a violation of ourselves. It is when we are among the rejected, the so-called Gentiles, that God will praise us!

Like John, who was only one person, we will often be *“A voice crying out in the wilderness,”* struggling to prepare a way for the justice of God; naming the “ruthlessness” of the times; challenging those who claim faith, like the ones John confronts in the

Gospel, yet perpetrate deeds of violence, exclusion, and hatred. John calls them, a *"brood of vipers."*

We prepare a way for the Lord when, by the light of the Gospel, we see and feel injustice and *ruthless* acts; we *prepare a way for the Lord* when we speak for the land's afflicted with a daring, persistent and joyful hope, and *"learn to think in harmony with one another, in keeping with Christ."* We *prepare a way for the Lord*, when we wait, wait in joyful hope for the earth to finally be filled with knowledge of the Lord, longing for us all to do the work and carry the vision. We *prepare a way for the Lord*

when we believe that hope is manifest in both small and large ways, when hope is embraced even in days of darkness, even when so much seems lost. Hope is infectious, even when only one voice cries out. Hope is believing that *"the wolf can be the guest of the lamb, the calf and the young lion can browse together. The cow and the bear can be neighbors, the baby can play in the cobra's den.* Hope is a voice crying out in the desert of our times. It is the song of faithful, persistent people, sung among and with those whose hearts are frightened: *"Justice shall flourish in his time, and fullness of peace forever."* Psalm 72, Advent 2A

