

**Homily For Tuesday of the First Week of Advent - Year II**  
**St Peter's 8:30/7:00 Masses - Dec 5, 2023**

**Isaiah 11: 1-10** "On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples."

**Psalms 72:1-18** "May his name endure forever, as long as the sun and may all nations be blessed in him."

**Luke 10: 21-24**"I tell you many prophets and kings desired to see what you see and hear what you hear."

**All Creation Reveals God's Plan**

**Introduction**

Our Lady of Martyrs Catholic Church in Austin, Texas, began a famous billboard debate by posting on their sign out front, "All dogs go to heaven." The Presbyterian Church across the street responded on their sign, "Only humans go to heaven. Read the bible." It went on from there with the Catholics posting, "Catholic dogs go to heaven. Presbyterian dogs can talk to their pastor." The Presbyterians carried on, "Dogs are animals. There aren't any rocks in heaven either." I think the sign debate ended with Our Lady of Martyrs posting, "All rocks go to heaven."

That's funny stuff. But Isaiah was not taking as a joke the participation of all creation in God's plan to bring about salvation, not just to Israel, but to all peoples and nations. The created order is not just a set for a play. A play can carry on with only actors and no background set at all. But the self revelation of God seems pretty strongly to incorporate animals and trees and the cosmos itself into this plan to bring all peoples and nations to the fullness of the knowledge of God. Yes, there is a distinction to make between people and the rest of creation, but we see right from creation in Genesis that our salvation is worked out in that created order, not separate from it.

**Isaiah**

Isaiah prophesies that a shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. Isaiah witnessed the fall and utter destruction of the northern kingdom of Israel to the Assyrians. As God's prophet, he saw the

same fate for the southern kingdom of Judah, ruled over by the descendents of David. The stump of Jesse looked like the end of David's line. It is an image of life cut down, like a tree. Jesse is the father of David. His line seemed to have been cut off. You would think a tree cut down would be dead immediately, but it takes a long time for that to happen. Shoots continue to pop up everywhere. Nature tells us that apparent death is not always final death. In this way, creation itself points to the reality of loss of spiritual life, which will be resurrected for those who cooperate with God's plan. Creation itself will be transformed. The wolf and the lamb will lie down together. God will bring peace where it is not expected.

All creation participates in this prophecy: the animals, the cosmos, the trees and the nations as well as individuals. There is one who is to come who will fulfill the meaning of what is already written into creation itself. "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord." These are the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit that those who are to be confirmed must reflect upon. The psalmist continues the prophecy. The one who is to come will bring unity among all the nations.

## **Luke**

At some point, what looks like just a metaphor, now suddenly takes on truth for those who believe. "A little child will guide them." In Luke, it is shown that God was faithful to his promises, for a time underground. But a descendent of David will have the gifts of the Holy Spirit foretold by Isaiah.

The Catechism says: "The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and fear of the Lord. These gifts belong in their fullness to Christ, son of David. They make the faithful docile in readily obeying divine inspiration."

The seventy had just returned from their evangelizing ministry full of joy because they had experienced a temporary foretaste of the gifts of the Holy Spirit which would be given to the Church at Pentecost. The Gospel passage today also tells us that "Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit". It inspired him to immediate prayer: "I

thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants." The wise and intelligent are those who fill themselves only with the wisdom of the world and leave no room for the promptings of God's Spirit. Those who are infants are those who are docile to those same promptings.

### **Call To Conversion**

We prepare to celebrate again the coming of the Christ into the world, the one who is the fulfilment of every human longing, the shoot from the stump of Jesse. With the eyes to see and a heart ready to receive, we can experience that joy no matter what is going on in the circumstances of our lives.

Christian hope, which is light for the world, will only be had by those who are simple and humble of heart, because God has hidden knowledge and the mystery of his kingdom's love from the wise and expert, that is to say, from the ones who are blinded by pride.

The coming of the Messiah and of his Kingdom, in which justice and peace will bloom, is a new reality where the kingdom we are waiting for is making its way day by day. Our hope comes from God himself, who has hidden his plan of salvation in creation, in plain sight for those who have eyes to see and ears to hear.

## **Key Passages**

**Entrance Antiphon:** *Behold, the Lord will come, and all his holy ones with him. And on that day there will be a great light.*

**Collect:** *Look with favour, Lord God, on our petitions, and grant us your compassionate help that, consoled by the presence of your Son, whose coming we now await, we may be tainted no longer by the corruption of former ways.*

**Isaiah:** *A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall judge with righteousness the poor, and decide with equity for the meek. With the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. The wolf shall live with the lamb, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze and their young shall lie down together. The lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. The earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples. The nations shall inquire of him.*

**Psalms:** *Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to a king's son. May he have dominion from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth. He has pity on the weak. From oppression and violence he redeems their life. Precious is their blood in his sight. May his name endure forever, as long as the sun. May all nations be blessed in him.*

**Luke:** *The seventy returned with joy and told Jesus all that they had done. At that same hour Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "I thank you Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent, and have revealed them to infants. All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him." Then, turning to the disciples, Jesus said, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see! For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it."*

**Prayer Over the Offerings:** *Be pleased, O Lord, with our humble prayers and offerings.*

**Prayer After Communion:** *O Lord, teach us to judge wisely the things of earth and hold firm to the things of heaven.*