



A Reflection for the first Sunday of Advent A: An expectant Waiting

1st Reading	Isaiah 2:1-5
Responsorial Psalm	Psalms 122: 1-2, 3-4, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9
2nd Reading	Romans 13:11-14
Alleluia	Psalms 85:8
Gospel	Matthew 24:37-44

The four weeks of Advent constitute a season of expectant waiting and preparation for the nativity of Christ and his return in the Second Coming. Waiting is a sign of hope. Hope for healing to a broken world that needs fixing. The world is broken because it abhors waiting preferring quick fix solutions to issues that bedevil it. These quick fix solutions eventually fail hurting the world even more.

The expected Messiah gives hope because he is the only one who is able to fix our broken world. He is able to mend and repair it.

A prince of peace

The first reading from Isaiah draws our attention to a peaceful coexistence. “They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; one nation shall not raise the sword against another, nor shall they train for war again.” Peace therefore can neither be achieved through wars nor by building walls. It is a gift from God as we find in John 14:27 New Catholic Bible (NCB). However, humanity is at liberty to elect either to embrace this gift or not to. More often than not, peace is not chosen yet the fruits of not embracing this invaluable gift peace are conflicts, violence, wars, discrimination, and their attendant outcomes.

Prophet Isaiah speaks to our broken world urging nations and governments to turn their swords into ploughshares, their spears into pruning hooks, their military budgets into development budgets and hatred into love. Although it may sound difficult, this transformation is possible through the grace of the Messiah, the Prince of peace.

Keep watch as you wait

Matthew in the Gospel directs our thoughts towards ‘keeping watch’ as we approach *Parousia* because the Lord will come at a time we do not expect. We therefore have to keep watch and prepare. This can seem to be a long wait tempting humanity to deviate, a dangerous path to take.

A ready and expectant spirit inspires careful observation of the times. Preparedness and watchfulness are accomplished through prayer. Those who are not watching are not praying, and those who are not praying are not watching. Prayer is dialogue with God. Constant communication with God keeps a person hopeful while at the same time maintaining a relationship with Him. If the world faithfully keeps watch through prayer, hope will replace despair and fear.

The wars we witness in the world are reminiscent of a desperate world; a world that lacks the preparedness for the Savior, a world full of fear, a world that courts an attitude of self-sufficiency and locks the Messiah out of its matrix. This attitude tries to nip hope at the bud casting humanity to the mercy of fear and despair.

The time of Advent is therefore a time to stop war, discrimination and embrace the all-encompassing Christ. We are all called to wait for Christ who heals our broken world because waiting is not a waste of time but the price we pay for our healing (John 5:3-New Catholic Bible).

Have an expectant waiting for the Messiah during this Advent Season, wont you!

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