



## **Preaching for Dominican Month of Peace Second Sunday of Advent: December 4, 2022 Isaiah 11:1-10**

Promises, promises, promises! Isaiah's vision of the peaceable kingdom is a veritable litany of promises. Impossible things will happen to those who are faithful, to those who believe. What are we to make of these glorious promises when our brothers and sisters are mired in suffering that challenges the imagination of those of us who live in safety, those of us who have plenty – more than enough – to eat and drink, to those of us who sleep in warm, soft beds every night, comforted by the quiet?

Can we let go of our stereotypes of human and beast who have always lived as traditional enemies? Picture a wolf and a lamb, a leopard and a kid, a calf and a young lion, a cow and a bear. Visualize these traditional enemies enjoying - not just tolerating – but enjoying each other's company.

Can you see a little child, a little, innocent child walking among these beasts, petting them, talking to them, taking sheer delight in them with absolutely no fear or apprehension?

This peaceable kingdom promised by the prophet Isaiah is the Reign of Justice. "If you want peace, work for justice." This was the simple but profound declaration of Pope Paul VI in his message for the Celebration of the Day of Peace in 1972. It holds true even more today.

Where do we begin to work for justice? We begin within ourselves, each one of us. Can we name and claim the wild beasts within our souls: envy, violence, anger, revenge? On the other hand, that isn't all there is within us, any more than only wild beasts dominate our land. We have inside the deepest core of who we are, the gentle ones: compassion, generosity, love, gratitude. They're all together in each human being. How do they get along with each other? Do they truly enjoy the company of one another? That depends on the presence of that innocent child, the Christ, whom we invite into our inner world to walk among the creatures that vie for our attention.

Each one of us is a microcosm of the planet we inhabit. Each one of us holds the power to create or to destroy, reach out or to invite in. Each of us is called to work for a justice that gives birth to peace.

Can we dedicate this Advent Season to the restoration of both the Reign within and the Reign outside?  
Can we claim our place in the Family of God?

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