

2025_12_07 Homily
Second Sunday of Advent

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/120725.cfm>

The beginning of today's Gospel tells us that John the Baptist is in the desert proclaiming repentance. Why in the desert? The symbolism is deep. The desert is outside the town, far from the support of civilization. It is a place where spiritual seekers go to confront their demons and beasts, to purify their minds, to return to essentials. This purification climate of the desert complements John's central activity: He baptizes people and calls them to change their minds and their behaviors, to go beyond their present mindset, and embrace a new life.

Repentance is the first step in the process of fulfillment. It allows us to move on, to forgive our past sins, and to continue our journey of life, centered on our essence, on the unique greatness that each one of us possesses. Conversion, then, is a demanding but beautiful adventure. It is like unpacking a precious gift, because we basically unpack the great potential which allows us to be what we have been created for. This is why Jesus constantly calls us to a life of conversion, of letting go, of constant change, to a bigger picture of reality in which God's dreams are fulfilled.

If we do not seek conversion, life has a way of slowly dying. If we resist new challenges, we will live a life filled with abilities and gifts that never get cultivated and developed. In the future, when we look back in life, we will see the deep intimate conversations with God that we never had; the great bold Prayers that we never prayed; the exciting Risks that we never took; the Sacrificial gifts that we never offered; the Lives we never touched, and the Forgotten dreams... One day we will realize that there was a world of desperate need, and a great God calling us to be part of something bigger than ourselves: We will see the person we could have become but we did not, because we never followed our calling.

Conversion is a process that leads us to see the truest essence of people: We were created in the image and likeness of God. And the image of God within each person is not always visible to people with hearts that are not pure. Even though history is dark and we are so sinful, God's light keeps alive within us. The divine flame is always inside every human being. This Advent, we can ask ourselves questions like the following ones: Where are we at this moment? Are we really living? And are we living the life that God WANTS us to live? Are we happy and fulfilled, at peace with our family, neighbors, and above all, ourselves? If not, then we should do something about it... There is no tragedy like the tragedy of the unopened gift. But when we repent, our true greatness is unpacked, and it allows us to unfold the amazing God given gifts that each one of us possesses. Once we unfold our gifts, we become able to offer them, to

use them wisely, and to be part of the change that we all want to see in the world. If unpacking a Christmas gift is so exciting, can you imagine how we feel when we unpack our hearts and realize how amazing, unique, and beautiful we truly are? Conversion is one of the most beautiful opportunities that we have to grow in life. It could be challenging, painful, It could require patience and perseverance, but it truly leads us to grow, to have a better life, to find the best version of ourselves.

Have you ever wondered what God sees in us? Even though imperfect and always stumbling disciples, we are called to become like God, because we are in essence what God is: Merciful, kind, able to unconditionally love ourselves and others, people with the power to bless the world with deeds of justice, reconciliation, and salvation.

Isn't it what the world needs now from you and from me?

The Universal Prayer
Sunday 7th December 2025
Second Sunday of Advent

Celebrant:

Sisters and brothers, we hear the call of John the Baptist: Repent for the kingdom of God is close at hand, and so are sincere in our prayers.

1. That under the leadership of Pope Leo, the whole Church will be filled with the Spirit of wisdom and insight, of counsel and holy power, of knowledge and reverence of the Lord.
We pray to the Lord.
2. That in this second week of Advent we will focus on treating each other in the same friendly way as Christ treats us.
We pray to the Lord.
3. That relief will be given to those affected by floods in Thailand, Sri Lanka and Indonesia, and the destruction by fire of the apartments in Hong Kong.
We pray to the Lord.
4. That the land where John the Baptist proclaimed the Kingdom of God and where Isaiah saw a time when wolf and lamb, panther and kid, calf and lion would lie together, be enfolded in the peace of God.
We pray to the Lord.
5. That the persecutions against Christians in Nigeria and Somalia may be replaced with a right to freedom of religion.

We pray to the Lord.

6. That those who have died in the floods of Southeast Asia and the apartment fires in Hong Kong will live in the glorious home of God.

We pray to the Lord.

Celebrant:

Almighty God let your days of justice flourish with peace until the moon fails; rule from sea to sea, and save the poor when they cry to you.

Through Christ our Lord.