

2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Isaiah 11:1-10 Romans 15:4-9 Matthew 3:1-12

HOMILY

On this Advent Sunday we hear the fiery preaching of John the Baptist
“Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is close at hand.”

❖ His is a message of repentance.

In the New Testament we hear numerous examples of repentance:

- **Zacchaeus** coming down from the tree gives half his goods to the poor (Luke 19),
- **the publican tax collector** in the rear of the temple, beating his chest, saying ***“be merciful to me a sinner”***
- **The prodigal son** returning to his father (Luke 15),
- **the sinful woman** anointing Jesus feet with her tears,
- the penitent thief crucified with Jesus who cries out: ***“Lord, remember me when You come into Your Kingdom?”***

Through these sinful people, we learn that repentance is **not just**

- a) **feeling bad** or **sorry** about transgressing God’s commandments.
 - b) about changing our minds,
- ❖ but that repentance is about **changing our lives**.

CHANGE OF LIFE

In the first place, where there is repentance **you can see that**

- *ugly words are replaced by kind words.*
- *Dishonesty turns into honesty.*
- *Frictions in family life are healed.*
- *Pride turns to humility and*
- *healthy agreement takes the place of disagreement.*

EMBRACING THE KINGDOM

At the same time repentance is not just about changing our lives, but even more so, it is about **turning to the kingdom of God**.

- John the Baptist today says ***“Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand”***
- In other words, turning away from sin turns you towards God.
- Turning away from sin results into total dependence on God.

REPENTANCE IS ABOUT ERADICATING SOURCES OF OUR DOWNFALL

You may know that joke of the man who woke up in the morning deeply repentant after a bitter fight with his wife the previous night.

He noticed with dismay the crate of **beer bottles** that had caused the fight.

He took it outside and started smashing the empty bottles onto the wall one by one.

- He smashed the first bottle swearing, ***“you are the reason I fight with my wife”***.
- He smashed the second bottle, ***“you are the reason I don’t love my children”***.
- He took out the third bottle, looked at it, smashing it as he said: ***“you are the reason I don’t have a decent job”***.
- When he took the fourth bottle, he realized that the bottle was still sealed and was full.
He looked at it for a moment and said ***“you stand aside, I know you were not involved”***.

Repentance is about truly wanting to turn our lives around.

- No wonder JB was so harsh on the ***Pharisees and Sadducees*** who came to him to be baptised shouting out to at them, ***“Brood of vipers!”*** because even if they joined the que they really didn’t mean to repent

Repentance is not only going to a priest and confessing.

- Prior to that we must **desire to change** our life.
- we must **seek the renewal** of our life.

To respond to John’s call for repentance I invite you to come for the Advent reconciliation today at 5pm.

If you haven’t been to the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation as a family, give it a try.

- ❖ No sin is unforgivable,