

## **HOMILY for 2<sup>nd</sup> SUNDAY of ADVENT – Year A**

This Sunday's First Reading tells us about the dream world where all the wild animals would get along. Reflecting on that, I'm reminded of this cute story that I'd like to share with you.

An antelope & a lion entered a diner & took a booth near the window. When the waiter approached, the antelope said, "I'll have a bowl of hay & a side order of radishes."

"And what will your friend have?"

"Nothing," replied the antelope.

The waiter persisted. "Isn't he hungry?"

"Hey, if he were hungry," said the antelope, "would I still be sitting here?"

That picture of an antelope & a lion sitting down in a diner together might appear impossible for us. But, that miracle is exactly what prophet Isaiah had dreamt about & would like us to pray for in this season of Advent. Last Sunday, the prophet wants to ask us to pray for a world where we'd be able to transform deadly weapons to useful tools for daily living. This Second Sunday of Advent, the prophet would like to add another dimension to that new, magical world in the First Reading as the following, "...He [the Lord] shall judge the poor with justice, & decide aright for the Land's afflicted. He shall strike the ruthless with the rod of his mouth, & with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked. Justice shall be the band around his waist, & faithfulness a belt upon his hips... Then, the wolf shall be the guest of the lamb, & the leopard shall lie down with the kid; the calf & the young lion shall browse together, with a little child to guide them. The cow & the bear shall be neighbors, together their young shall rest; the lion shall eat hay like the ox. The baby shall play by the cobra's den, & the child lay his hand on the adder's lair. There shall be no harm or ruin on all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be filled with knowledge of the Lord."

First of all, the prophet calls us to dream for a world where the predators would befriend with the preys & there would be no harm or ruin to anyone. All the current killings & acts of violence would disappear. For in our current world, we do not see the wolf stand peacefully next to the lamb, or the leopard next to the kid, or the young lion next to the calf, or the bear next to the cow, or the lion next to the ox. By their animal instincts, the former will hunt down the latter & hurt them. The adder/cobra snake will not be safe around a child without posing a serious threat to it. For our current world is all about kill or be killed, about stepping on the weak & getting whatever we want for ourselves. It's truly a wild jungle out there without any law or consideration for someone else. That is why the prophet wants us to pray for the miraculous transformation of our current world & dream for a new, harmonious world.

However, that world would come about if & only if the whole earth would be filled with knowledge of the Lord. For the Lord will judge the world with justice & hold the ruthless & the wicked accountable for their actions. In case we'd like to learn more about the knowledge of the Lord, St. Paul tells us about it in this Sunday's Second Reading as the following, "...May God, the source of all patience & encouragement, enable you to live in perfect harmony with one another according to the spirit of Christ Jesus, so that with one heart & voice you may glorify God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ... Accept one another, then, as Christ accepted you, for the glory of God." So, St. Paul lets us have a glimpse of the knowledge of the Lord by reminding

us that God is the source of patience & encouragement. God accepts us the way we are & patiently forgives our mistakes. God encourages us to accept one another & imitate God's way. That is how we could transform our current world of evil & violence into the dream world of prophet Isaiah in today's First Reading, where the predators would befriend with the preys.

You might think that the peaceful & harmonious world of prophet Isaiah in today's First Reading will never happen in this life. For our current world sure does not have knowledge of the Lord or want to learn more about it & practice it. Everyone seems to like doing things their own ways & stepping on one another for their own benefits without any consideration for their neighbors. Everyone is full of pride, greed, envy, & selfishness. That is why our current world remains to be a dog-eat-dog one. However, once I've watched a program that showed how a dog would befriend with a deer, a cat with a chicken or duck, & so on. It seems like those animals were able to get rid of their wild instincts & learn to accept one another as true neighbors. I immediately thought about the dream world of prophet Isaiah in today's First Reading. So, in order for all the animals to get along & avoid hurting one another, they need to be filled with knowledge of the Lord & trained at a young age. The older they are, the harder it would be for them to overcome their animal instincts & avoid hurting one another. That is why I think that our current world has failed to train & teach the young to embrace a life of love & peace at home, at school, at work, & in society. Otherwise, we would not see all the evil & violent acts happen around us like now every day. Instead, everyone would act & treat one another like the dream world of prophet Isaiah in today's First Reading.

My dear brothers & sisters, the voice of John the Baptist cries out from the desert calling us to prepare the way of the Lord this Advent & welcome the coming of our Savior into our hearts & homes. One of the ways for us to make that preparation happen is to pray for the dream world of prophet Isaiah in today's First Reading where every creature will get along & stop causing harm & destruction to one another. We then begin building that world by trying to reduce acts of evil & violence in our current world & working hard to promote peace & love wherever we go this season.