2 Homily for the Second Sunday of Advent Year A

4 December 2016

Is 11:1-10; Rom 15:4-9; Mt 3:1-12

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin once suggested that peace and justice will come to us when we reach a certain high amount of psychic temperature so as to burn away the things that still hold us apart. In saying this, he was drawing upon a principle in chemistry: Sometimes two contrasting elements will simply lie side by side inside a test-tube and not unite until sufficient heat is applied so as to bring them to a high enough temperature where unity can take place.

What is this high enough temperature that can bring this unity of two contrasting realities? The baptism of fire and the gifts of the Holy Spirit poured together upon us abundantly. They are explained in the first reading today, namely, wisdom, understanding, right judgment, courage, knowledge, reverence, wonder and awe in the presence of God. The word “baptism,” which is transliterated directly from the Greek, actually means “dipping in a liquid.” In Mediterranean antiquity, water, fire, and wind (or spirit) were viewed as liquids that could be poured upon or into people. This is the baptism that we are called to be dipped into during this Advent which brings about a Messianic Age that the prophet Isaiah speaks about.

This Messianic age fills the earth with knowledge of the Lord. This knowledge brings about perfect harmony and peace. What potentially can destroy us, what potentially can be harmful to us will disappear. Wolves will eat with lambs, leopards with kids. Lions will browse with calves, cows, and bears. Babies will play near cobras as if they were cordial neighbours.

When we are baptized in the Holy Spirit, He makes the impossible happen in us. A new life, a new shoot, a new program begins to operate inside of us. The life of the Lord Jesus Himself will begin to manifest itself in us. What is contrary to Christ in our hearts will be destroyed and a new reality, i.e. “Christ-reality” will spring up in us. It is this “Christ-reality” we are going to bear in our hearts and give birth to at Christmas. Mary bore this “Christ-reality” first in her heart before she bore Him in her physical womb.

Let me wind up this reflection with the modern perception of the Messianic age. Music, Art, Dance, Film, Theatre, and Poetry whisper Truth and inspire the Soul. Any form of fundamentalism in religion will disappear. Children and women will be able to live freely without being abused. The dignity of life in all its forms from conception to death will be respected. Rivers, Air, Sea, Forests and Land will not be polluted for man’s greed, rather protected for the benefit of all men and women. Refugees and Asylum seekers are welcomed for what they are. Discrimination based on race, religion, colour, culture and language will be a thing of the past.