



Homily for the Second Sunday of Advent

December 7, 2025

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Desire for a Perfect World

Imagine for a moment a perfect world. What would that look like for you? A world without fear, without betrayal, without violence? A world where everything is in harmony and nothing is broken? Every one of us can imagine such a world, and that fact alone is remarkable, because none of us has ever lived in a perfect world. The human ability to imagine perfection is a sign of something deeper. It is part of being made in the image and likeness of God. It reveals that we were created with a purpose higher than anything this fallen world can offer. C. S. Lewis made this observation when he wrote, “If I find in myself desires which nothing in this world can satisfy, the only logical explanation is that I was made for another world” (Mere Christianity, Book III, Ch. 10). That longing for another world is at the heart of Advent. And in these first two weeks of the season, the Church directs our attention not only to Christ’s coming in Bethlehem, but also to His coming again in glory at the end of the ages. This is what we are professing in the Creed when we declare our belief that “He will come again in Glory to judge the living and the dead.” But we also proclaim our hope for and anticipation of what this will bring. “I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.” We often think of the Second Coming only in terms of dramatic upheaval. Scripture does not shy away from this: the Lord says, “the powers of the heavens will be shaken” (Luke 21:26); St. Paul speaks of the Lord descending “with a cry of command, with the archangel’s call” (1 Thessalonians 4:16); and St. Peter says that “the heavens will pass away with a loud noise” (2 Peter 3:10). This can be a traumatic and even frightful thing for someone who does not have hope in a world to come. But for the believer, for the one who regularly professes his looking forward to the life of the world to come, the Second Coming is not primarily a threat. It is our hope. In today’s second reading, St. Paul tells us why God has given us the Scriptures: “that by endurance and by the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope” (Romans 15:4). Hope in the world that is coming. Hope in the restoration of all things. Hope that Christ will fulfill what He has begun. We want Jesus to come again. Come, Lord Jesus!

Isaiah gives us a glimpse of that world: the wolf dwelling with the lamb, the lion eating hay like the ox, infants playing where serpents hide and no one is harmed (Isaiah 11:6–8). A world without violence, without death, without fear. This is creation restored. This is the world our hearts instinctively recognize as home, the world our imagination reaches toward as a sign of the divine image within us.

How do we reach that world? Only through Jesus Christ. He tells us, “I am the way” (John 14:6) and “I am the gate” (John 10:9). And we enter that way, we enter into the life of Jesus through His Bride, the Church. The saving sacraments are the means Christ Himself instituted to communicate His life to us. In today’s Gospel, John the Baptist announces that the Messiah will baptize “with the Holy Spirit and fire” (Matthew 3:11). This fire is the power of Confirmation, the completion of Christian initiation, the strengthening of the Spirit for the life of discipleship. Those who are baptized, confirmed, and nourished with the Eucharist are made citizens of the world to come even as they walk through this world today. This is the mission of the Catholic Church that Jesus Christ founded – to unite the world to Christ.

The early Church Fathers understood this mystery clearly. St. Ignatius of Antioch wrote, “Where the Church is, there is Jesus Christ” (Smyrnaeans 8:2). St. Cyprian taught, “He cannot have God for his Father who does not have the Church for his Mother” (On the Unity of the Church 6). To belong to Christ is to belong to His Church and to submit to the saving work He accomplishes through her sacramental life.



Last night, we witnessed this saving work unfold in our own parish. Twenty-one people completed their Christian initiation and entered into full communion with the Catholic Church. We have another 100 in our English-speaking OCIA program and another 50 or so in our Spanish Language program who are preparing to receive the saving sacraments at Easter. Nearly two hundred souls journeying toward Baptism or Full Communion this year. The Holy Spirit is clearly at work in our community, stirring hearts, awakening faith, and drawing souls into the Kingdom.

And here is where this year's parish theme speaks directly to this moment. The Church is called to be a builder of culture. Christ describes His disciples as salt, light, and leaven in the world, not to oppose the world from a distance, but to transform it from within, elevating what is good and preparing the soil for the seed of the Kingdom. But we cannot build a culture of holiness, charity, and hope unless we first know the world we are building toward. The world we long for, the world our imagination grasps, the world God has promised is the very world Christ will bring fully to life at His Second Coming. Our task in the present is to let the life of the world to come shape how we live in this world that is passing away.

Our efforts in the here and now are not meant to construct a perfect society on earth – we are not 'Utopia builders' - we aren't trying to right all the wrongs by creating a perfect society. We aren't trying to end poverty or be social justice warriors for every cause under the sun. It isn't the Church's primary mission to govern society through political means. These all have worldly goals and ends. The Church's mission, just like the human heart's aspiration, transcends this world.

It is rather for us to prepare hearts and souls for the Kingdom that is coming, a Kingdom already established with Christ Jesus as the head. And as a secondary effect, when Christians live faithfully in this world, this world begins to resemble the heaven we await. This is what I mean by culture building. The reorientation of the human soul and body towards the world that is to come. Our culture building flows from hope, and that hope is strengthened today by the encouragement of the Scriptures and the fire of the Holy Spirit.

Advent calls us to renew our desire for the life of the world to come and to recommit ourselves to the sacraments, to prayer, and to the unity of the Church by which we encounter Christ and apart from which we wither and fade. It calls us to stir into flame the gifts God has placed within us and to allow the Holy Spirit to shape us into people who live now as citizens of the Kingdom that will have no end. Christ is coming to fulfill every desire He has planted in the human heart. He is coming to bring about the world Isaiah foresaw, the world we imagine because we were created for it. And so, we wait, we hope, and we build a culture of faith, charity, and joy trusting in the promise of life everlasting and the peace and glory that await us in the world to come.