

Reflection for Thursday of 2nd week of Advent Br Adams

The personality and ministry of John the Baptist mark not only a chronological stage but a qualitative leap between all that the prophets and the Law, had brought, as Jesus recalls. The coming of John the Baptist allowed the passage from the time of hope to the time of realisation of salvation. He is the prophet Elijah, who is to come, that is, He who announces the coming of the Messiah and the fulfilment of all that had been foretold by the prophets. We live in this time of Christ's advent not only in the night of Bethlehem but throughout the centuries until his final return. We are living this moment when faith in God the Saviour is no longer simply a hope carried by the prophets but a reality lived in communion, in his incarnate Son.

If we live in this faith, we are led to bear witness to God the Saviour, to God the Redeemer. The first sign of that testimony is that we believe, we know, and we hope, that, He shall come to our aid. So, we cannot live under the regime of fear, but we must live under the regime of trust. It is striking that over the past two centuries, cultural secularization, which presented itself as the deliverance and liberation of man, has gradually extended the domains of fear. Fear for one's own life, for one's own future, and collective fear of the society in which we live. This fear settles insensibly but irremediably in the regime of anguish. What is the point of being released as promised, if it is to become new slaves?

Christians do not have the solutions to all the problems of society and human history, but they have a conviction which must constitute the witness of hope. Whatever happens, we know that we have a saviour and that saviour is the God of Israel. Whatever happens, we know that we have entered the last times and that the nativity of Christ manifests to men that the kingdom of heaven has come near.

Brothers and sisters, in the preparation of the celebration of the Nativity, may this certainty of God's closeness to men and women, of God's closeness to his people, of God's closeness to us, be a guarantee against the anguish of the future and enable us to bear witness by our hope.