



STAGE - Third Sunday of Advent, Saint Luke (3, 10-18)

« What should we do? »

The main reason why Mary need not be afraid is that she has found favour with God. The word “grace” speaks of love freely given, not owed. How much we are encouraged to know that we do not have to earn the closeness and help of God, by presenting a “Curriculum Vitae of excellence”, full of merits and successes!... (World Youth Day 2018, n. 3)

The passage from Luke tells us about the testimony of John the Baptist, who presents himself as the preacher of the conversion as a change of mentality that translates into concrete actions. That's why his listeners ask him what they have to do to become before the Lord comes. John just tells them to try to live without making concessions to selfishness: that they share their goods with others, that they do not commit extortion or blackmail, that they do not oppress anyone. In front of the coming of the Lord who is near, everything can and must change. The conversion is always forward and does not consist in stopping to mourn or lament what happens. Who really hopes is not just about thinking, but about doing. The hope born of faith in Jesus is not a question of look, of new eyes, but also of new hands and adequate and effective work in the construction of humanity renewed in love.

The Christian faith, as a hope for the future, cannot serve as an alibi to evade the present and be a sleeping pill of the people instead of acting as a stimulus and drive.

For the mind, heart and behaviour of man to be in accordance with the justice demanded by the Kingdom, it is necessary to allow oneself to be invaded by the Spirit of God.

Advent is an invitation to Joy that is the conviction God loves us, that we are in his hands, and that everything must and can change. It is joy that springs from the heart that knows that what it expects will be fulfilled despite the setbacks; but it is joy that begins at the very moment in which we suspend our excessive desire to search for our own happiness in order to procure that of others. Our joy is neither authentic nor Christian if we act unjustly before the marginalized, before man, before violence.

Helping and serving is what causes the joy of the Christian and are necessary and complementary ways to experience the presence of the Lord in our midst if we want to be faithful to the Good News that John has announced and Jesus made. It's the Good News that we want to celebrate next Christmas.