

Week Two



Sunday, 8th December 2019

A meditation based on Isaiah 11:1-10

A shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse. (Isaiah 11:1)

Have you ever seen a Jesse Tree? It's an ancient Advent tradition consisting of a carving, painting, or stained glass window - even an actual tree - that portrays the people, prophecies, and events leading up to the birth of the Messiah. Jesus is usually at the top. Many medieval Jesse Trees also included a depiction of Jesse himself lying at the base of the tree. That's because the design comes from today's first reading: a shoot sprouting "from the stump of Jesse" (Isaiah 11:1)

Jesse was the father of King David and an ancestor of Jesus, so the branches of the Jesse Tree are meant to display Jesus' rich and varied heritage. The Tree reminds us how faithful God was during the "long Advent" when his people waited for the Messiah. Each person and event represented on the tree depicts part of God's plan to save his people. Prophets like Jeremiah and Isaiah often show up. So do David, Solomon, and other kings, as well as virtuous women like Ruth, Esther, and Susanna.

Even if you don't decorate a Jesse Tree in your home, the ideas behind it can help you prepare for Christmas. During Advent, it's traditional to review stories from the Old Testament that promise the coming of the Messiah. Stories of these ancestors of Jesus illustrate God's commitment to his plan to save us. It's a commitment that stretched from the very beginning, through thousands of years, right up to Christmas Day. It's a commitment too that reaches even to the present.

Jesus' birth has brought about something new and wonderful, and the Jesse Tree illustrates it: a salvation that is far more wide-reaching than we ever could have imagined.

TODAY'S OTHER READINGS

Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17

Romans 15: 4-9

Matthew 3:1-12

Pray...

"Heavenly Father, thank you for your faithfulness to your promises! Thank you for making me a part of your family."



The 2nd Sunday of Advent symbolizes Faith with the "Bethlehem Candle" reminding us of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem.



Lest we should ever think that we are too small or insignificant to help bring about the Kingdom of God. We should remember Mary. [Click here for a 4 min Advent Retreat.](#)