

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

WAY
OF
LOVE



WAY OF TRUST AND LOVE

Reflection and Prayer for Advent 2023 in the Jubilee Year in Honour of St Therese of Lisieux.

From The Readings

‘Console my people, console them,’ says your God. ‘Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her that her time of service is ended, that her sin is atoned for, that she has received from the hand of the Lord double punishment for all her crimes.’

A voice cries, ‘Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord. Make a straight highway for our God across the desert. Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low, let every cliff become a plain, and the ridges a valley; then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all mankind shall see it; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.’

(Isaiah 40:1-5)



Mercy and faithfulness have met; justice and peace have embraced.

Faithfulness shall spring from the earth and justice look down from heaven.

The Lord will make us prosper and our earth shall yield its fruit.

Justice shall march before him and peace shall follow his steps. *(Psalm 84/85:10-13)*

It is written in the prophet Isaiah: Look, I am going to send my messenger in front of you to prepare your way before you. A voice of one that cries in the desert: Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight. (Mark 1:1-3)

From Pope Francis and Saint Therese of Lisieux

In the *Story of a Soul*, Therese tells how she discovered the little way: “I can, then, in spite of my littleness, aspire to holiness. It is impossible for me to grow up, and so I must bear with myself such as I am, with all my imperfections. But I want to seek out a means of going to heaven by a little way, a way that is very straight, very short, and totally new”. (Pope Francis, *C'est La Confiance*, 15)

This is the “sweet way of love” that Jesus sets before the little and the poor, before everyone. It is the way of true happiness ... (Pope Francis, *C'est La Confiance*, 17)

I read these words ... “Whoever is very little let him come to me.”... “So I have stayed little ... being little means not attributing to ourselves the virtues we practise, but recognising that God places this treasure in the hands of his little child so that she can use it when she needs it; but the treasure is still God’s.”

(Therese of Lisieux, quoted in: *The Way of Trust and Love*, 27, 41)

If we are in the hands of a Father who loves us without limits ... we will be able to move beyond whatever may happen to us and, in one way or another, his plan of love and fullness will come to fulfilment in our lives.

(Pope Francis, *C'est La Confiance*, 24)

Therese could define her mission in these words: “I shall desire in heaven the same thing as I do now on earth: to love Jesus and to make him loved” ... she did not view her consecration to God apart from the pursuit of the good of her brothers and sisters.

(Pope Francis, *C'est La Confiance*, 8-9)

FOR THINKING AND TALKING

- **What words or phrases stand out for you in these readings and insights of Pope Francis and Saint Therese?**
- **What insights might you take with you on your own journey?**

PRAYER

A prayer of Saint Therese

O Jesus,

I ask You to draw me into the flames of Your love,
to unite me so closely to You that You live and act in me. Amen.

(Adapted from Therese of Lisieux, Carmelite of Boston: www.carmelitesofboston.org/prayer)



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