

Second Sunday of Advent



An unknown source says: “If we put off repentance another day, we have a day more to repent of, and a day less to repent in.”

The artist’s reconciliation: Leonardo da Vinci painted the fresco (wall painting), “The Last Supper,” in Santa Maria delle Grazie church in Milan in three years (1495-1498). A very interesting story is associated with this painting. At the time that Leonardo da Vinci painted “The Last Supper,” he had an enemy who was a fellow painter. Da Vinci had had a bitter argument with this man and despised him. When Da Vinci painted the face of Judas Iscariot at the table with Jesus, he used the face of his enemy so that it

would be present for ages as the man who betrayed Jesus. While painting this picture, he took delight in knowing that others would actually notice the face of his enemy on Judas. As he worked on the faces of the other disciples, he often tried to paint the face of Jesus but couldn’t make any progress. Da Vinci felt frustrated and confused. In time, he realized what was wrong. His hatred for the other painter was holding him back from finishing the face of Jesus. Only after making peace with his fellow-painter, and repainting the face of Judas, was he able to paint the face of Jesus and complete his masterpiece. — Be reconciled with your fellow human beings, says today’s Gospel.

Looking at today’s gospel reading, this speaks also about change and true conversion. St. John the Baptist begins with a strict injunction: “Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand!” and during these four weeks of Advent season we are told to prepare ourselves for Christ’s coming at Christmas by a renewal of our lives. In addition, the Baptist also speaks about preparing the way of the Lord and making straight His path.

So, what are we going to do now? What we are going to do is repent. A great saint once said: **“There is no holiness without repentance for we begin in sin**

and move to holiness by repentance alone.” The words “repent,” “repentance,” and “repented” are mentioned over 100 times in the Bible. Repenting is turning, repenting is change and repenting is living differently.

True repentance involves many **Rs**.

The first **R** is *Regret* or we are sorry and for the right reason. This means that we honestly accept the wrongs we have done. There is no other reason why we regret but love.

The second **R** is *Repair* or *Restore*. This means we are willing and able to make up for the damages or harm we have caused for our sins. We accept it without rationalization, justification or projection of the sins we have committed and blamed others for doing it.

The third **R** is *Reconciliation*. This means that strange or broken relationships are mended or made whole again. We have come back to God as our Father and to each other as brothers and sisters. Reconciliation is changing also for a better relationship between two or more persons. Theologically it refers to the change of relationship between God and man.

The last **R** is *Renewal*. This means there is a change within us that is of course, reflected in change of behavior. In other words, this is conversion which literally means, change of direction or a turning away from sin and turning towards God happens. This is an ongoing never-ending process.

After going through with these four Rs, we are renewed and become agents of renewals of others. It is because real repentance leads to true conversion and in turn true conversion produces good fruits.

And so how do I witness at home, to my spouse, to my children, in my work, and in my parish? Do I understand that my example is powerful?