



29. November 2020

First Sunday of Advent
“The coming of the Lord to the earth”
Introduction

Today's reflection on the first Sunday in Advent should be seen as a foreword to our plans for the “short Lent” of Advent.

During these weeks of preparation for the feast of the birth of Christ, the daily reflections are linked to four lectures on the Advent season, which I will publish on my YouTube channel on the corresponding Sunday in Advent:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCl-gQ2X45ZgU96o15SUYLbQ>

Unfortunately, due to time constraints, I can only give them in English with a translation into Spanish. But the following daily reflections will reflect and deepen the topics of the lectures, so that also the German speaking and other listeners can follow the way through the Advent season until the feast of our Lord.

These are special Advent seasons with an apocalyptic dimension.

Who could have imagined a year ago that an epidemic and the way the state and the church deal with it would cause people to suffer such restrictions on their civil freedom and that public church life would be so reduced?

The central element of the liturgical life of Catholics, namely the celebration of the Holy Mass, is at times completely prevented in some countries, in others it is only possible under limited conditions, apart from the alienating processes of a mask duty even in the service!

In Advent the daily reflections with the lectures should not primarily be made the subject of discussions about the “why” of this event, why God allows this to happen, whereby this question is of course “in the air” and can always have an influence.

Rather, I hope that the lectures and reflections direct our hearts towards God, from whom alone comes true consolation (*cf. 2 Cor 1:3-4*). “*Sky and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away*” (*Mt 24:35*) is what Jesus, the Redeemer of mankind, tells us. Therefore it is important to use this time of Advent, especially

in (apocalyptic) times, as a deep invitation to deepen our relationship with God. In Him alone is the true security for our life in time and eternity. “*Do not put your trust in princes, in any child of Adam, who has no power to save*” the psalmist calls to us (*Ps 146:3*). A word that is realised before our eyes in a very clear way.

The choir of Harpa Dei will accompany me and is preparing a concert for Christmas to give a vocal expression to the joy of angels and men over the birth of the Saviour. It was the angels who rushed to the shepherds in Bethlehem to proclaim the wonderful message of salvation (*cf. Lk 2:8-14*).

The deepening of the action of God, which permeates all times, makes us even more aware that we are safe in God's hand, whatever is coming. We are invited to offer our heart to the living God as a dwelling place and give it to Jesus, as it says in a touching Christmas carol: “Born in Bethlehem is a little child to us. I will give him my heart and all that I have.”

In times when consolation is limited by the services, we should deepen the Word of the Lord in us all the more and internalise the way of following the Lord. Then the star of Bethlehem will shine over our lives even in the midst of the darkness of this world and faith will become a sure light in all darkness and increasing anti-Christian confusion!

This is important not only for us, but also for other people who wander in the darkness and seek the way. For them these “apocalyptic times” are much more difficult than for the faithful. But these times may also be a way of waking up from the illusions of these times and sincerely seeking God. For this we all need prayer and witness as a help.

We ask our listeners to pray that the Lord may sound his “harps” well, to give his presence to reach many people, because the coming of the Messiah is for all people. The message of the Saviour's birth needs to be proclaimed, because how are men to believe if no one speaks to them? (*cf. Rom 10:14*)

In this sense, we unite ourselves with the Lord and firmly trust that it will be a particularly gracious time when He prepares us to better understand the mysteries of His love day by day.