Second Sunday of Advent (A)

Gospel text (*Mt* 3:1-12): John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the desert of Judea and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" It was of him that the prophet Isaiah had spoken when he said: "A voice of one crying out in the desert, 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.'..."

Advent: to listen to God's voice through the Sacred Scriptures

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(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today, the Gospel presents to us the figure of St John the Baptist, who withdrew to the desert of Judaea and, with his preaching, called the people to convert so as to be ready for the coming of the Messiah, now at hand.

Saint Gregory the Great commented that John the Baptist "preaches upright faith and good works, so that the force of grace may penetrate, the light of the truth shine out, the paths to God be straightened and honest thoughts be born in the mind after hearing the word". The Precursor of Jesus, situated between the Old Covenant and the New, is like a star that heralds the rising of the Sun, of Christ, the One, that is, upon whom —according to another of Isaiah's prophecies— "the Spirit of the Lord shall rest... the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord" (Is 11:2).

—We too are called to listen to God's voice, that cries out in the desert of the world through the Sacred Scriptures.