

Feast of Christ the King
(Sunday before the Advent Season):
Advent as a Season of the Holy Spirit (The Anointed Messiah):

Advent prepares us for the final coming of the Messiah and remembers his first coming. The Hebrew word, *Messiah*, means “Anointed One,” the one anointed by the Spirit, who has the fullness of the Spirit. The word, *Messiah*, is translated into the Greek word, “*Christ*.” In the Hebrew Scriptures priests, prophets and kings were considered “anointed ones” because they were anointed with the Spirit (often with oil) for God’s service. Isaiah and other prophets foretold a final Messiah who would:

1) Have the fullness of the Spirit:

“A shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse...The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him...” (Isaiah 11:1-9); “Here is my servant whom I uphold...Upon whom I have put my Spirit...” (Isaiah 42:1-9); “The Spirit of God is upon me, because he has anointed me; he has sent me to bring glad tidings to the lowly, to heal the brokenhearted...” (Isaiah 61:1-3);

2) Impart this Spirit to all God’s people:

“Then afterward I will pour out my Spirit on all mankind. Your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; even upon the servants and the handmaids, in those days, I will pour out my Spirit” (Joel 3:1-2; Acts 2:14-21).

The three major figures in Advent, who prepare us for the coming of the Messiah, each teach us about the Holy Spirit:

1) Isaiah, the prophet: He proclaims the “Holy Spirit anointed” Messiah (see #1 above; Isaiah 11, 42, 61);

2) John the Baptist: The one who “prepares the way of the Lord” (Luke 3:3-6); who is “filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother’s womb” (Lk 1:15); who goes before the messiah “in the spirit and power of Elijah” (Lk 1:17); and proclaims that “one mightier than I is coming...he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire” (Luke 3:15-16).

3) Mary, the Mother of Jesus: She is told by the angel, Gabriel, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God” (Luke 1:35). Mary manifests the presence and gifts of the Holy Spirit in her visit to Elizabeth (Luke 1: 39-45) and in her prophetic prayer (often called the “Magnificat,” Luke 1:46-55).

On the Feast of Christ the King let us prepare for the Season of Advent by interceding with Mary, John the Baptist and Isaiah (with prayer and fasting) that “The Spirit...bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God...and joint heirs with Christ” (Rom 8:16-17), and we, and the whole Church, come to a greater understanding of Jesus as the Christ, the anointed of the Spirit, who wants to baptize us with the Holy Spirit.

We pray for the second coming of the Messiah:

“Marana tha!

Come, Lord Jesus!

(1 Cor 16:22; Rev 22:20).