

In today's Gospel we hear the familiar text of the Centurion's profession of faith:

*"Lord, I am not worthy to have you enter under my roof;
only say the word and my servant will be healed."*

These same words we recite in the newly translated prayer before we receive Holy Communion.

And, as well, in the First Reading from Isaiah, we hear that:

the word of the LORD [shall go forth] from Jerusalem

In the Gospel, the Centurion - an officer in the Roman army who had command over 100 troops - recognizes the power of the Word incarnate. The Centurion's faith in Jesus' power in turn amazes Jesus.

In fact, the word used here, '*marvelled*' is only used 8 times in Matthew's Gospel; but always in that the crowds *marvelled* at Jesus. This is the only time that Jesus *marvelled* at anything or anyone.

The prophesy from Isaiah describes the power of the Word of the LORD in the bold description of not just peace, but a complete reversal of hostility and the tools of war.

The prophet points out the power of God's Word to transform the wages of sin - of a sinful world - that is death and the deadly machines of war ... while in the Gospel, it is a military man - possessing great worldly power - who recognizes the power of the Word of God - in the person of Jesus Christ - the Word made flesh - to restore the health of his servant.

Advent is the time when we prepare for the coming of God in human form - the incarnation of the Second Person of the Trinity - the Word of God - in the flesh.

Let us pray for the grace to allow the Word of God to restore us to the image and likeness of God - the image and likeness in which we were created. Let us trust in the power - the transformative power - of the Word - the Word made flesh - Jesus Christ - who is with us in the Eucharist we celebrate today - let us put our faith in His power to transform us that we might be empowered to, in turn, transform the world for Christ.