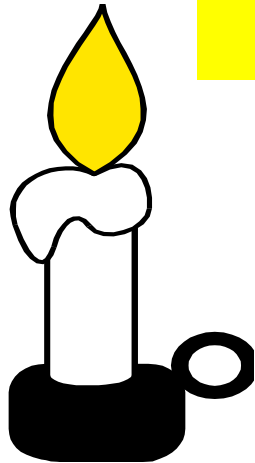




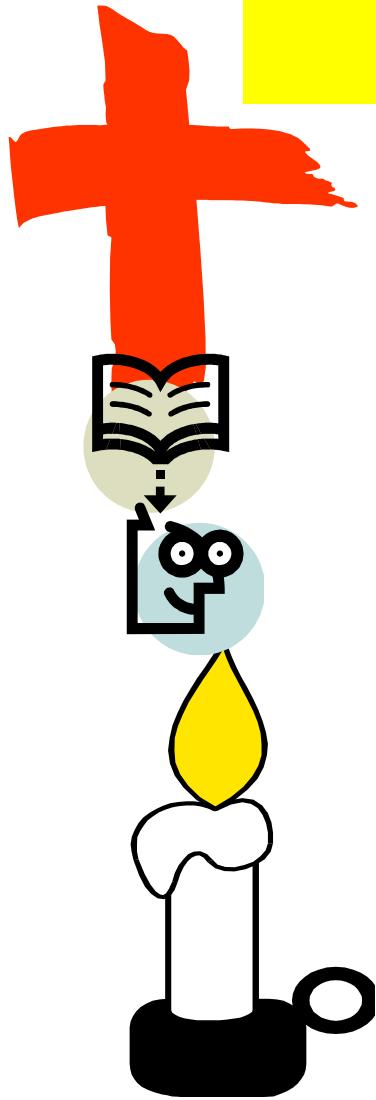
Bearers of Hope

Figures from the Advent Liturgy



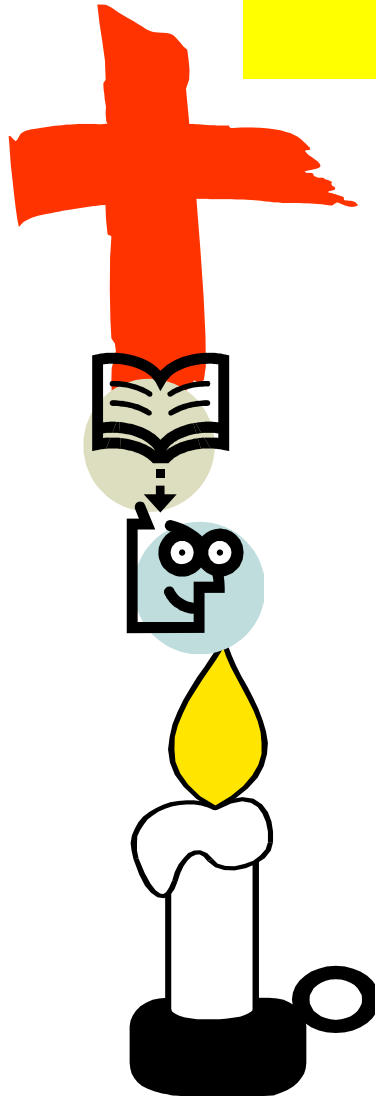
December 2020

Liturgical Year



- A liturgical celebration of ‘**the love story recounted by the Bible**’ (Pope Benedict- Deus Caritas Est 2005, para 17)
- Each season has its emphasis
- Advent - Journeying in hope
- Liturgy gives us
 - Isaiah
 - John the Baptist
 - Mary

Hope



Pope John Paul II

- 2003: The Church in Europe

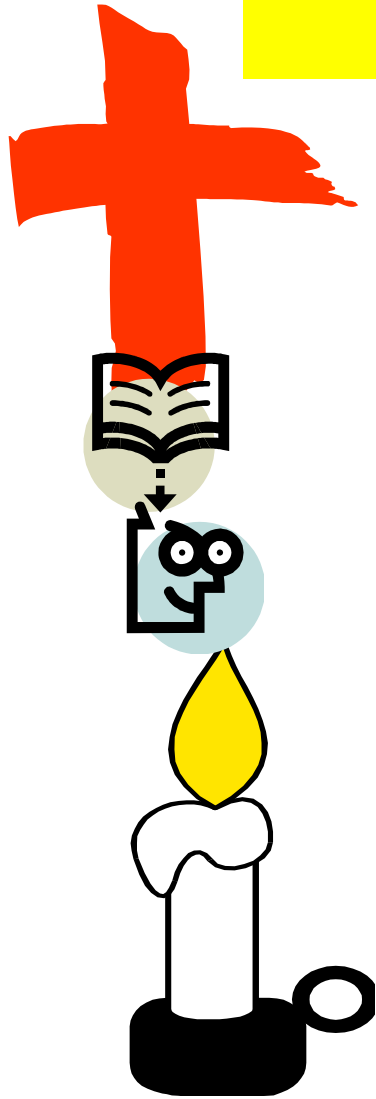
Pope Benedict XVI

- 2007: Saved by Hope

Pope Francis

- 2015 The Joy of the Gospel
 - Faith as a source of joy and hope

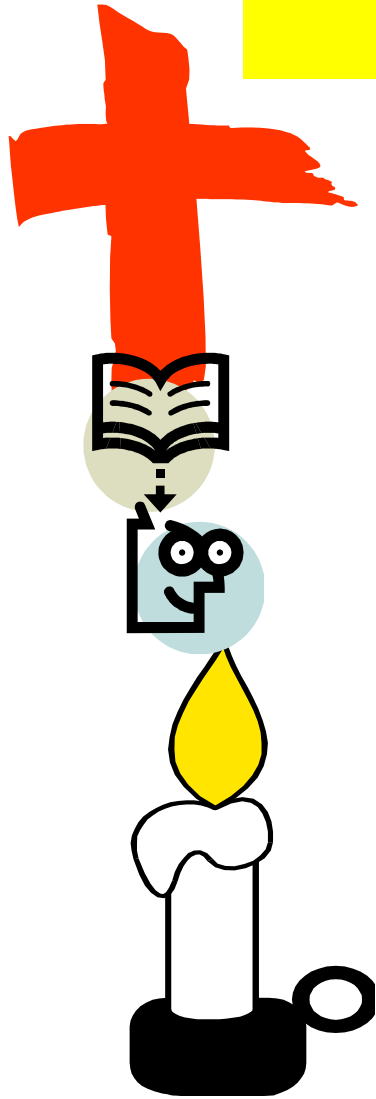
Prophetic voice



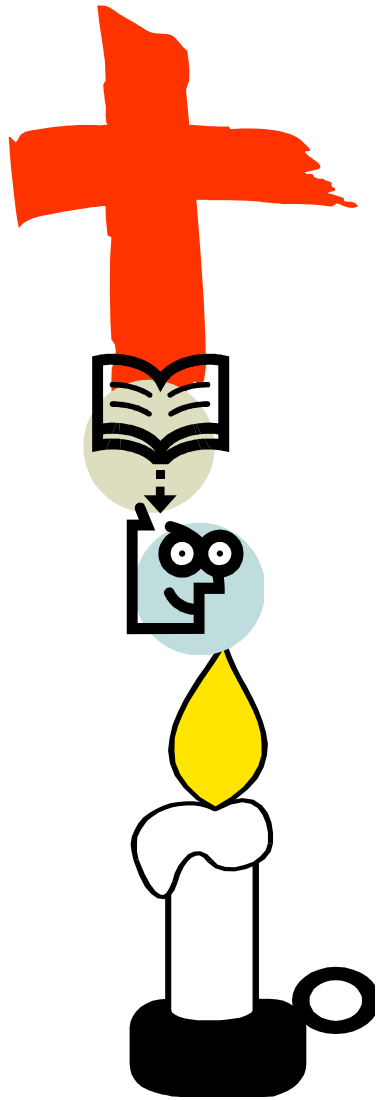
Hope – *things can be different!*

- Speaking uncomfortable truths to political and religious power
- Not identical with being a grump who always moans
- Prophets are happy complainers
 - They criticise and encourage
 - A confident restlessness that means they see God's big picture and are never content with us being in our comfort zone.

OT and NT



- *'This happened to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet'*
- *The principal purpose to which the plan of the Old Covenant was directed was to prepare for the coming both of Christ, the universal Redeemer, and of the messianic kingdom. (Lumen Gentium 15)*
- *The OT is a prophecy of the NT and the best commentary on the OT is the NT (Dei Verbum 41)*



Isaiah

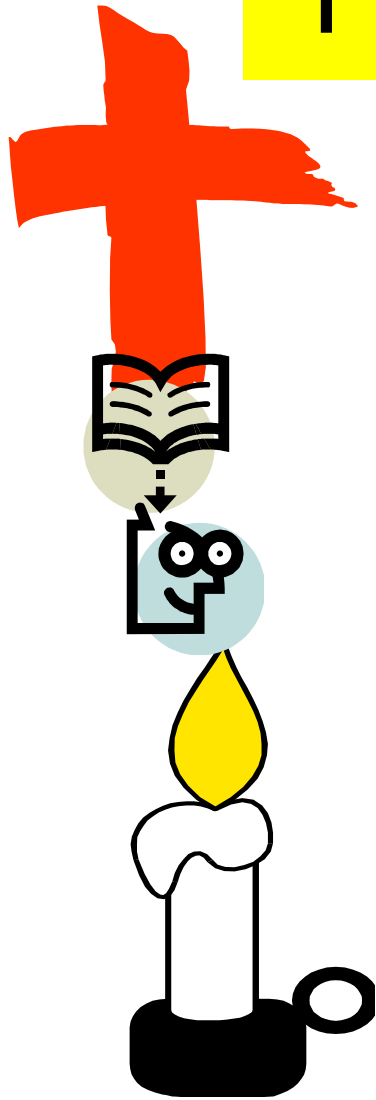
Born c 765BC

Worked at royal court

- Had a strong sense of being called
- Feels inadequate before holiness of God
- Is prepared to be God's messenger
Here I am, send me (6:9)

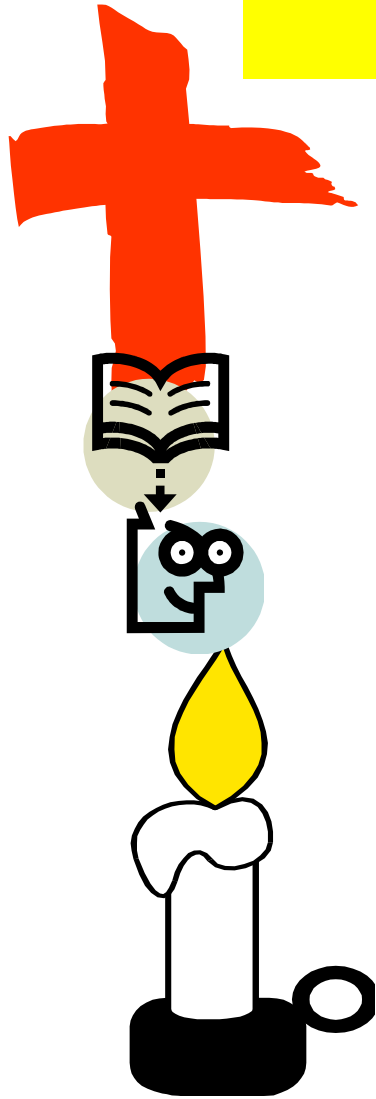
Unwelcome message of destruction -
And of hope after purification.

Predominant voice in Advent

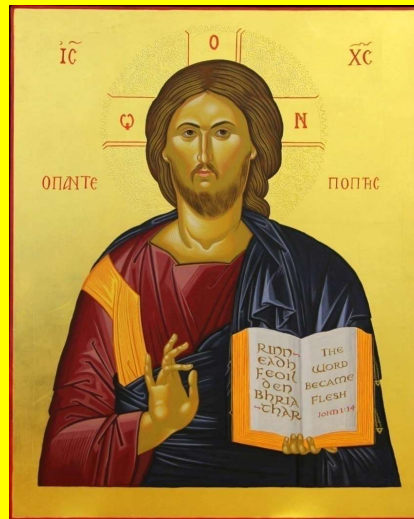


- But not just talking about his time
- Appears as first reading in majority of Advent Masses (14 of first 15 days!).
- Prophet who most clearly points to the Christ – who will come some 7 centuries later!
- Even called by some ‘The Fifth Gospel’

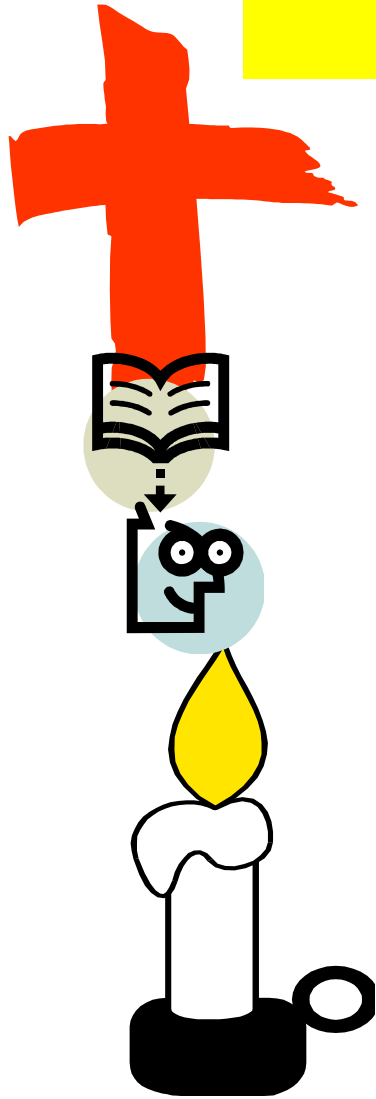
His message of hope



- *The maiden is with child and will soon give birth to a Son whom she shall call Emmanuel (Is7:14)*



Part of bigger picture



Light in darkness

The people that walked in darkness has seen a great light. On those who live in a land of deep shadow, a light has shone (9:1-6)

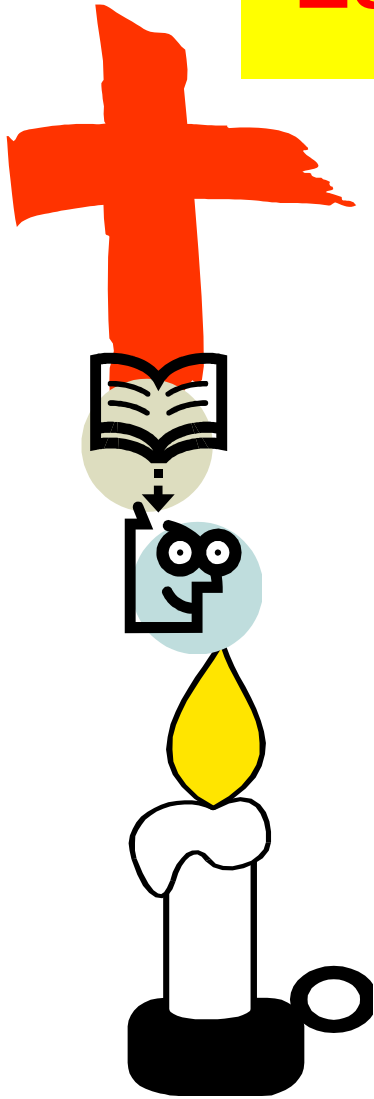
Prince of Peace

Will be anointed with the spirit of wisdom and insight, the spirit of counsel and power, and the spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord (11:1-9)

People will hammer their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks. (Is 2:4)

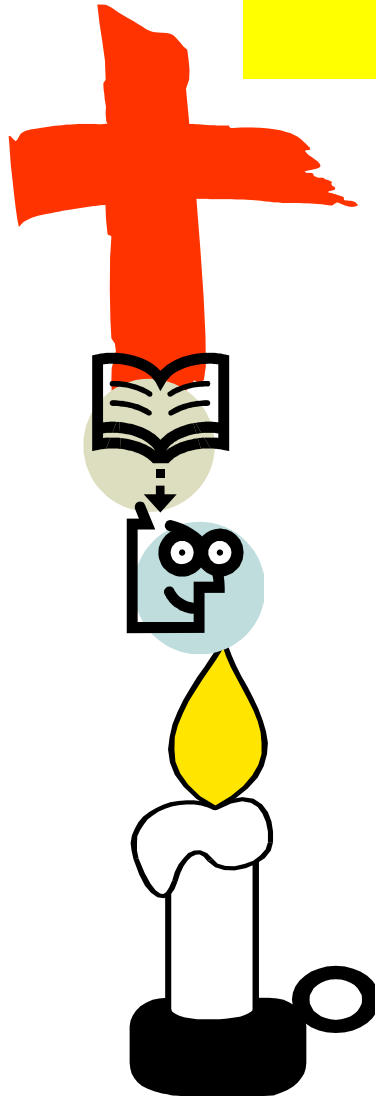
The world can be renewed!

Later chapters about the Messiah



- Four 'Songs of the Suffering Servant' (Ch 42, 49, 50, 52, 53)
- Quoted at Baptism and Transfiguration
- *Here is my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom my soul delights (42:1)*
- Fulfilled at Jesus' death
 - Vital passages for the early Church to explain Jesus' death

A poet with beautiful lines

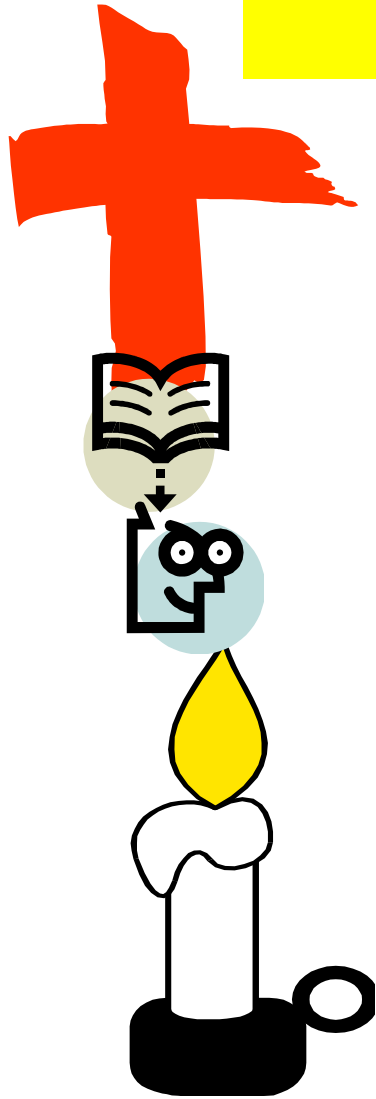


- I have called you by your name and you are mine (Is 43:1)

- God called me before I was born, from my mother's womb he pronounced my name (Is 49:1)

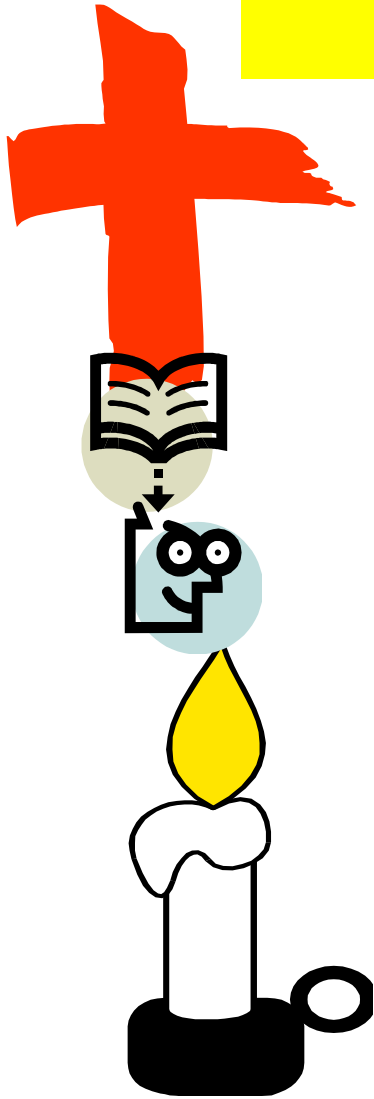
- Does a woman forget the baby at the breast or fail to cherish the child of her womb? Yet even if these forget, I will never forget you. I have carved you on the palm of my hand. (49:15-16)

Homework!



- In the context of **Hope**, read
- Is 6:1-10. The call of Isaiah – to a mission.
- Is 7:14-15. Emmanuel – God with us.
- Mark 1:1-8 (Next Sunday) – what prophetic voice do we have or need today?

Resources



- www.derrydiocese.org
- www.shalomworld.org/show/the-nativity-trail
- www.catholicbishops.ie/readings/
- www.universalis.com