

focus on sunday

The message of repentance during this season of Advent is a call to each one of us to look deeply into our lives, to renew and deepen our relationship with God and our fellow sisters and brothers.



Prepare



I heard the historian, Tom Holland, say once that if the Christian churches are going to be effective in speaking about Christ and faith, and communicating the living reality Christ is, then we will have to insist 'on the weird stuff'.

I don't recall how he explained that remark in detail but it still seems to me that he meant we should continue to speak confidently about the miraculous in and around the life of Jesus and, yes, in and around the life of the Church.

Insist, for example that Jesus walked on water – even though that event has become a byword for arrogance. Insist that Jesus turned water into wine – even if that has become the flattest joke every time a priest has a drink. Insist too that Jesus forgave sins – and always will – and above all, insist that Jesus rose from the dead.

In St John's gospel, chapter six recalls another strange moment: when Jesus and his disciples feed 5,000 people with five loaves and two fish. It is another moment we might take at face value and accept it as an act of love by a loving God who will not allow his people to go hungry and who, in and through his incarnate Word – Jesus – feeds those who sit down filled only with expectation. It is another moment that defies human expectation in that Jesus entrusts the feeding of the 5,000 to his apparently helpless disciples and a small boy.

The richness of the meaning of the feeding of the 5,000 is inexhaustible. The event asks so much of us who follow Christ but who may even still hang back, sceptical or perhaps nervous of what may come if we give in to Christ too much. And, of course, like the Apostles, members of the SVP may also be afraid that we do not have enough to meet the need all around us. In this we might remember we are in good company. The Apostles themselves were as apprehensive as we can be and could barely believe their eyes or their ears at how things turned out. But these were the people Christ sent into the world beyond Judea and Galilee...and, as members of the SVP, we're next.

Paschal Scallion CM | Vincentian Community

Jesus' Story

Fr. Liam Hickey

Today we light two of the four candles on the Advent wreath as we prepare for the birth of Jesus. In our first reading Baruch, the prophet, tells us to be joyful, 'put on the beauty of the glory of God'. We do this by being a good friend at school, washing the dishes after dinner and by remembering to say a prayer of thanks to Jesus as we go to bed.



EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right and just.

SANCTUS

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

AFTER THE CONSECRATION

The mystery of faith.
When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup,
we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.

INVITATION TO HOLY COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,
Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights,
and behold the joy which comes to you from God.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Replenished by the food of spiritual nourishment,
we humbly beseech you, O Lord,
that, through our partaking in this mystery, you may teach us to judge wisely the things of earth and hold firm to the things of heaven.
Through Christ our Lord.

CONCLUDING RITE

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.
May the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever. Amen.
Go in peace. Thanks be to God.



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ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

O people of Sion, behold,
the Lord will come to save the nations,
and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard in the joy of your heart.

GREETING

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.

PENITENTIAL ACT

You raise the dead to life in the Spirit: Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
You bring pardon and peace to the sinner: Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.
You bring light to those in darkness: Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
May almighty God have mercy on us.... Amen.
(The Gloria is omitted awaiting its Christmas Proclamation.)

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty and merciful God, may no earthly undertaking hinder those who set out in haste to meet your Son, but may our learning of heavenly wisdom gain us admittance to his company. Who lives and reigns.....



LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING Baruch 5:1-9

A reading from the prophet Baruch.
Jerusalem, take off your dress of sorrow and distress, put on the beauty of the glory of God for ever, wrap the cloak of the integrity of God around you, put the diadem of the glory of the Eternal on your head: since God means to show your splendour to every nation under heaven, since the name God gives you for ever will be, 'Peace through integrity, and honour through devotedness'.
Arise, Jerusalem, stand on the heights and turn your eyes to the east: see your sons reassembled from west and east at the command of the Holy One, jubilant that God has remembered them.
Though they left you on foot, with enemies for an escort, now God brings them back to you like royal princes carried back in glory.

For God has decreed the flattening of each high mountain, of the everlasting hills, the filling of the valleys to make the ground level so that Israel can walk in safety under the glory of God. And the forests and every fragrant tree will provide shade for Israel at the command of God;

for God will guide Israel in joy by the light of his glory with his mercy and integrity for escort.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps. 125

R. What marvels the Lord worked for us! Indeed we were glad.

- When the Lord delivered Zion from bondage, it seemed like a dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, on our lips there were songs. [R]
- The heathens themselves said: 'What marvels the Lord worked for them!' What marvels the Lord worked for us! Indeed we were glad. [R]
- Deliver us, O Lord, from our bondage as streams in dry land. Those who are sowing in tears will sing when they reap. [R]
- They go out, they go out, full of tears, carrying seed for the sowing: they come back, they come back, full of song, carrying their sheaves. [R]

SECOND READING

Philippians 1:3-6.8-11

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Philippians.

Every time I pray for all of you, I pray with joy, remembering how you have helped to spread the Good News from the day you first heard it right up to the present. I am quite certain that the One who began this good work in you will see that it is finished when the Day of Christ Jesus comes. God knows how much I miss you all, loving you as Christ Jesus loves you. My prayer is that your love for each other may increase more and more and never stop improving your knowledge and deepening your perception so that you can always recognise what is best. This will help you to become pure and blameless, and prepare you for the Day of Christ, when you will reach the perfect goodness which Jesus Christ produces in us for the glory and praise of God.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!
Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight, and all mankind shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia!

GOSPEL Luke 3:1-6

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar's reign, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of the lands

of Ituraea and Trachonitis, Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. He went through the whole Jordan district proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the sayings of the prophet Isaiah: A voice cries in the wilderness: Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley will be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low, winding ways will be straightened and rough roads made smooth. And all mankind shall see the salvation of God.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

All bow for following three lines:

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Pray brothers and sisters,.....
May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Be pleased, O Lord, with our humble prayers and offerings, and, since we have no merits to plead our cause, come, we pray, to our rescue with the protection of your mercy. Through Christ our Lord.