

OUR SUNDAY CELEBRATION

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT / B

13 DECEMBER 2020

This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' he not only declared, but he declared quite openly, 'I am not the Christ.' 'Well then,' they asked 'are you Elijah?' 'I am not' he said. 'Are you the Prophet?' He answered, 'No.' So they said to him, 'Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?' So John said, 'I am, as Isaiah prophesied:

a voice that cries in the wilderness: Make a straight way for the Lord.' Now these men had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put this further question to him, 'Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the prophet?' John replied, 'I baptise with water; but there stands among you – unknown to you – the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal-strap.' This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptising.

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

HOMILY
PROFESSION OF FAITH APOSTLES' CREED
Or the Nicene Creed may be said.
I believe in God, / the Father almighty, / Creator of heaven and earth, / and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, / who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, / born of the Virgin Mary, / suffered under Pontius Pilate, / was crucified, died and was buried; / he descended into hell; / on the third day he rose again from the dead; / he ascended into heaven, / and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; / from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. / I believe in the Holy Spirit, / the holy catholic Church, / the communion of saints, / the forgiveness of sins, / the resurrection of the body, / and life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

After the priest raises the paten with the bread and prays, and then the chalice, we respond to each prayer:

R. Blessed be God for ever.
P. Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters), that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.
R. 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

P. May the sacrifice of our worship, Lord, we pray, be offered to you unceasingly, to complete what was begun in sacred mystery and powerfully accomplish for us your saving work.
Through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

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

PREFACE I OF ADVENT

After the Preface, we sing or say:
All: 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.

THE MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION

P. The mystery of faith.
All: Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your Cross and resurrection you have set us free.

COMMUNION RITE

P. At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

All: Our Father, who art in heaven ...
P. Deliver us, Lord, we pray ...
All: For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and for ever.
P. Lord Jesus Christ, who said ...
R. Amen.
P. The peace of the Lord be with you always.
R. And with your spirit.
P. Let us offer each other the sign of peace.
All exchange a sign of peace

LAMB OF GOD

All: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P. Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.
R. 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

cf. Isa 35:4
Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear. Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P. We implore your mercy, Lord, that this divine sustenance may cleanse us of our faults and prepare us for the coming feasts.
Through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

P. The Lord be with you.
R. And with your spirit.
P. May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
R. Amen.
P. Go forth, the Mass is ended.
R. Thanks be to God.

BREAKING OPEN THE WORD

JESUS, GOD'S GREATEST GIFT

The build-up to Christmas and the festive season has a way of leaving many people tired and stressed as many tasks call for our attention. It is probably impossible to avoid much of this as the feast of Christmas marks the end of the year and the beginning of the summer break. The readings for today can help each of us to determine more clearly what are our major priorities as Christians in preparing for Christmas.

Within the readings today two dimensions of our preparation are stressed. The first is the call to witness to our faith by sharing in God's life-giving, freeing, and healing love. The second dimension is that of finding time to give thanks and praise to God for the gifts we have received through the presence of Jesus among us.

Isaiah's mission of proclaiming liberty and God's love to those in exile comes out of his own experience of this love. Because of this experience, he is able to be a witness to what God is doing in his own day. John the Baptist provides us with a powerful example of a person of faith who is prepared to stand up and bear witness.

As Paul concludes the letter to the Thessalonians he reminds them that the best way to prepare for the Lord's return is by living at peace with one another and being constant in their prayer. One relationship nourishes the other. Making time for the Lord in prayer enables us to make time for each other.

CHRISTOPHER MONAGHAN CP

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REJOICING IN GOD, OUR SAVIOUR. Christmas is a feast of joy and light. We celebrate God who comes to dwell among us and save us. With the prophet Isaiah, we exult for joy in the Lord. With Mary, our spirits rejoice in God our saviour. We do not deny the pain and evil that exist in the world, but we rejoice in the knowledge that nothing can come between us and the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus.

INTRODUCTORY RITES

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON Phil 4: 4-5
Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near.

GREETING

P. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
R. Amen.
P. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
R. And with your spirit.

PENITENTIAL ACT

P. Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.

P. Have mercy on us, O Lord.
R. For we have sinned against you.
P. Show us, O Lord, your mercy.
R. And grant us your salvation.
P. May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.
R. Amen.
V. Lord, have mercy.
R. Lord, have mercy.
V. Christ, have mercy.
R. Christ, have mercy.
V. Lord, have mercy.
R. Lord, have mercy.

The Gloria is not said during Advent.

COLLECT

P. O God, who see how your people faithfully await the feast of the Lord's Nativity, enable us, we pray, to attain the joys of so great a salvation and to celebrate them always with solemn worship and glad rejoicing. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever
R. Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING Isa 61:1-2, 10-11
A reading from the prophet Isaiah
I exult for joy in the Lord.

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for the Lord has anointed me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to bind up hearts that are broken; to proclaim liberty to captives, freedom to those in prison; to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord.

'I exult for joy in the Lord, my soul rejoices in my God, for he has clothed me in the garments of salvation, he has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity, like a bridegroom wearing his wreath, like a bride adorned in her jewels. 'For as the earth makes fresh things grow, as a garden makes seeds spring up, so will the Lord make both integrity and praise spring up in the sight of nations.'
The word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Lk 1:46-50, 53-54
R. My soul rejoices in my God.
1. My soul glorifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour. He looks on his servant in her nothingness; henceforth all ages will call me blessed. **R.**
2. The Almighty works marvels for me. Holy his name!
His mercy is from age to age, on those who fear him. **R.**
3. He fills the starving with good things, sends the rich away empty. He protects Israel, his servant, remembering his mercy. **R.**

SECOND READING

1 Thess 5:16-24
A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians
May you all be kept blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Be happy at all times; pray constantly; and for all things give thanks to God, because this is what God expects you to do in Christ Jesus.



Never try to suppress the Spirit or treat the gift of prophecy with contempt; think before you do anything – hold on to what is good and avoid every form of evil.

May the God of peace make you perfect and holy; and may you all be kept safe and blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has called you and he will not fail you.

The word of the Lord.
R. Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Isa 61: 1 (Lk 4: 18)
Alleluia, alleluia!
The spirit of the Lord is upon me; he sent me to bring Good News to the poor. Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Jn 1:6-8,19-28
P. The Lord be with you.
R. And with your spirit
P. A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.
R. Glory to you, O Lord.
There stands among you, unknown to you, the one who is coming after me.
A man came, sent by God. His name was John. He came as a witness, as a witness to speak for the light, so that everyone might believe through him. He was not the light, only a witness to speak for the light.