

LIVING THE WORD

- Today is 'Gaudete' Sunday, when the Pink candle of the Advent Wreath is lit. The third Sunday of Advent takes its name from the first word of the entrance antiphon – 'Rejoice'. This theme is found in the first two readings. We are reminded that the joyful coming of Christ is drawing nearer. Christmas celebrates 'presence' with *presents*.
- Isaiah gives us the prophetic text which Jesus himself uses as his mission and identity statement in Luke (4:16). It speaks of bringing people back home, releasing them from slavery and imprisonment in foreign lands. A 'year of favour' was the 50th 'Jubilee Year' practice of forgiving all debts and returning all land back to its original family. What a beautiful revolution! What aspect of Jesus' mission could you practise this Christmas? With family?
- The marriage covenant image of God marrying his people is beautifully presented. In Christ – at Christmas – Heaven is now wedded to Earth. What does this mean? Do you truly rejoice?
- The call to holiness is repeated again as we journey toward the Second Coming – Advent continuously refuses to distinguish between the first and second coming of Jesus. The second reading becomes like a spiritual 'health check'. Do you: Rejoice? Pray frequently? Give thanks in the ups and downs? Pursue the will of God? Stop the Spirit? Avoid opportunities for God to speak? Filter good and evil influences upon your life? Hold fast to what is good? Turn from evil? Perhaps this 'check list' may help you in Advent preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Week 2 and 3 of Advent present the figure of John the Baptist. He is the one announcing the public arrival of the Messiah – Jesus. Like a herald announcing a King, the intention is to ensure readiness and welcome. Jewish custom expected Elijah and a prophet like Moses to return to make this announcement. Religious leaders are confused. What do you make of this 'debate'? The Gospel writer John neatly plays on words, with John the Baptist saying '*I am not*', which will later contrast with Jesus' repeated statements '**I AM**' (*the divine name received by Moses on Mt Sinai*). Does John the Baptist stir you to 'get ready'. If not, what would it take? What are you waiting for?
- The image of sandals actually teaches us about Jesus. It was a custom for disciples to carry the sandals of their teacher. But only a slave would untie the sandals and wash feet. John proclaims that Jesus is so holy that he is not 'fit' to even be considered a slave in the presence of Jesus. It is a reference to the holiness of God. We touch the awesome reality at Christmas: God is birthed – enfleshed – among us in Jesus. Do you *get* it?

HOW THE SYNOD WILL CHANGE THE CHURCH

When he stood up in the Paul VI audience hall on 18 October to give one of his spiritual reflections to the synod assembly, Fr Timothy Radcliffe OP recalled the first time the Church had met like this. It was in Jerusalem about 20 years after the death and rising of Christ. The young community, fractured and bewildered by Gentile conversions, was in the throes of its first major crisis of identity and direction. Yet when the faithful assembled to speak their minds and listen deeply to reports of what was happening, they realised that God was doing an unexpected thing. That first gathering of God's people with their leaders – the Council of Jerusalem, Synod 1.0 – would be decisive, opening a new universal horizon of missionary possibility that freed the Church to reform itself in order to evangelise a new era.

The point Fr Radcliffe wanted us to see was that those early Christians weren't flying in the dark. They "saw that God was already doing something new. God had gone before them. They had to catch up with the Holy Spirit." It wasn't easy for the "Jewish party" to accept Gentile conversions. Where did that leave the Chosen People? Today, God is bringing into existence a Church that is no longer European or even western, but eastern, southern, African and Asian; a Church in which women are taking responsibility, and young people, citizens in tomorrow's digital age, are taking Christianity into cultural frameworks bewildering to older generations. Today, Radcliffe suggested, just as at the Council of Jerusalem, there are two key questions for Christians: "*What is God doing?*" and, "*Do we accept God's gracious newness?*"

It was striking how, in all parts of the world, whether for lack of vocations or lack of resources, the emergent Church now looks in many ways like the early missionary era of Christianity. This is a Church where faith is transmitted more by witness and encounter than through culture and law and strong institutions. The Church going into the future will be formed through synodality.

The Synod on Synodality looks to a Church imagined by the Second Vatican Council's People of God ecclesiology: God's home and family, missionary and humble, relational, dialogical and participatory. It is one in which "co-responsibility for mission" is the key idea. It means we have to learn to listen, dialogue and discern, involve all in consultation, and move via consensus. The Church is to look for ways to enable this, look for new ways so we be Church into the future.

By Austen Ivereigh – The Tablet, 11 November 2023



CALENDAR

Monday

December 18
Advent Weekday

Jer 23:5-8
Mt 1:18-25

Tuesday

December 19
Advent Weekday

Jgs 13:2-7,
24-25a
Lk 1:5-25

Wednesday

December 20
Advent Weekday

Is 7:10-14
Lk 1:26-38

Thursday

December 21
Advent Weekday

Sg 2:8-14 or
Zep 3:14-18a
Lk 1:39-45

Friday

December 22
Advent Weekday

1 Sm 1:24-28
Lk 1:46-56

Saturday

December 23
Advent Weekday

Mal 3:1-4,
23-24
Lk 1:57-66

Sunday

December 24
Fourth Sunday
of Advent

2 Sm 7:1-5,
8b-12, 14a, 16
Rom 16:25-27
Lk 1:26-38

Schedule for Christmas 2023 and New Year 2024

Sunday, 24th December 2023 (Christmas Eve)

10:00 am. ENGLISH MASS

9.00 pm. Confession
10.30 pm. Mass in Thai, presided over by Archbishop Francis Xavier Card. Kriengsak Kovithavanij. (English booklets will be made available for the English-speaking community.)

From around 5.00 pm., there will be Christmas Market. All proceeds of ticket sales will go toward a range of charities supported by the Church.

Please use public transportation or park your cars at Assumption College.

Monday, 25th December 2023 (The Nativity of the Lord)

09:00 am. Thai Mass
11.00 am. ENGLISH MASS

Sunday, 31st December 2023 (New Year's Eve)

10:00 am. ENGLISH MASS

9:30 pm. Eucharistic Adoration
10.00 pm. Thai Mass

Monday, 1st January 2024 (Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God)

9:00 am. Thai Mass
11.00 am. ENGLISH MASS

APPEAL FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

Assumption Cathedral is organising the 2023 edition of its "Christmas Market". This will take place on Christmas Eve, December 24th, from around 5:00 pm, in the front courtyard and surrounding areas of the Cathedral. The event will include many different games and a host of other fun activities.

Tickets for this event will be sold right after Mass this morning – members of our Lay Ministry Team will approach you for your contributions. Money collected from the ticket sales will be used entirely to support the charitable activities of the Church, so please **dig deep** and give **generously** and **joyfully**.

ASSUMPTION CATHEDRAL

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Bangrak, Bangkok 10500
Thailand
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PASTOR:

Rev. Ignatius Adisak Somsaengsuang

ASSISTANTS:

Rev. Peter Booncharat Suksawang
Rev. Peter Withawat Kaewwaen

MASS SCHEDULE:

Mon-Fri : Thai 06:00 hrs.
Sat : Thai 06:00; 17:00 novena followed by mass
Sun : Thai 07:00; 08:30 and 17:00 hrs.
English 10:00 hrs.

BAPTISM:

Thai : **First Sunday** during 8:30 am mass.
English : **Second Sunday** during 10:00 am mass.

CONFESSION:

Sundays : Before all masses (Thai).
English before 10:00 am mass.

CATHOLIC CENTER:

For religious articles, please visit the center opposite the entrance of the Cathedral.

Opening Hours:

Mon-Fri : 08:30 – 17:00 hrs.
Sat, Sun : Closed
& public holidays

Dear Padre

December 17, 2023

Was Jesus born in a stable or a cave? The Christmas scene in our church has Jesus born in a little shed, but in my friend's church it looks more like a cave. The Bible says Jesus was born in a manger, so just where was Jesus born?

The Christmas scenes, sometimes called Nativity scenes or crèches, vary from church to church. In Scripture, we find more details about the Nativity in Luke's Gospel, but even he simply says that Mary wrapped Jesus in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger because the inn was full (Luke 2:7).

In none of the Scriptures do we have any details about what the place looked like, but since a manger is a place where caregivers feed livestock, we can assume that Jesus was born in a stable of some kind. At that time, small caves sometimes were used as stables.

Nativity scenes, though, are not an attempt to present a historically accurate picture of where Jesus was born. Rather, scenes of the birth of Jesus remind us of the special love that God shows for us in sending the Son to us. We do not care so much about creating an exact picture of what took place as we do of beholding the beauty and wonder of God born among us. ●

The Redemptorists / DearPadre.org

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MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION

We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

DOXOLOGY PLEASE STAND

Priest: Through him, and with him, and in him, O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honour is yours, for ever and ever.

GREAT AMEN

Amen. Amen. Amen.

COMMUNION RITE**THE LORD'S PRAYER (No. 387)**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

Priest: Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil; graciously grant peace in our days, that, by the help of your mercy, we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our saviour, Jesus Christ.

All: For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever.

LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. (Repeat)

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace, grant us peace.

PLEASE KNEEL

Priest: 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.

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

COMMUNION HYMN: JESUS, HOPE OF THE WORLD (No. 909)**FINAL HYMN: COME, THOU LONG-EXPECTED JESUS (Please see insertion)****PLEASE STAND****THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (Year B)**

Sunday, 17 December 2023

ENTRANCE HYMN: O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL (No. 395) PLEASE STAND**INTRODUCTORY RITE**

Priest: I confess to almighty God,

All: and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done, and in what I have failed to do;

– and, striking their breast, they say –

Through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault;

Therefore I ask blessed Mary, ever-virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

Priest: May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

All: Amen.

KYRIE, ELEISON / LORD, HAVE MERCY

Kýrie, eléison, (2); Christe, eléison, (2); Kýrie, eléison, (2).

FIRST READING: Is 61:1-2a, 10-11**A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah:**

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, to announce a year of favor from the LORD and a day of vindication by our God.

I rejoice heartily in the LORD, in my God is the joy of my soul; for he has clothed me with a robe of salvation and wrapped me in a mantle of justice, like a bridegroom adorned with a diadem, like a bride bedecked with her jewels. As the earth brings forth its plants, and a garden makes its growth spring up, so will the Lord GOD make justice and praise spring up before all the nations.

The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Lk 1: MY SOUL REJOICES IN MY GOD

1. My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked upon his lowly servant
From this day all generations will call me blessed: (R)
2. The Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name.
He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation. (R)
3. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.
He has come to the help of his servant Israel
for he has remembered his promise of mercy, (R)

SECOND READING: 1 Thes 5:16-24**A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Thessalonians:**

Brothers and sisters: Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophetic utterances. Test everything; retain what is good. Refrain from every kind of evil.

May the God of peace make you perfectly holy and may you entirely, spirit, soul, and body, be preserved blameless for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will also accomplish it.

The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: ALLELUIA PLEASE STAND

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

**All: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me
to bring glad tidings to the poor.**

GOSPEL: Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

Priest: The Lord be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

Priest: A reading from the Good News according to John.

All: Glory to you, Lord.

A man named John was sent from God. He came for testimony, to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to testify to the light.

And this is the testimony of John. When the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to him to ask him, "Who are you?" He admitted and did not deny it, but admitted, "I am not the Christ." So they asked him, "What are you then? Are you Elijah?" And he said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." So they said to him, "Who are you, so we can give an answer to those who sent us? What do you have to say for yourself?" He said:

"I am *the voice of one crying out in the desert, 'make straight the way of the Lord,'*"

as Isaiah the prophet said." Some Pharisees were also sent. They asked him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ or Elijah or the Prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water; but there is one among you whom you do not recognize, the one who is coming

after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie." This happened in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Priest: The Good News of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PLEASE BE SEATED**THE APOSTLES' CREED PLEASE STAND**

Priest: I believe in God,

All: 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.

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

RESPONSE TO THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL:

"Come, O Jesus, come."

PLEASE BE SEATED**LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST****PROCESSION OF THE GIFTS**

OFFERTORY HYMN: WAIT FOR THE LORD (No. 406)

PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS PLEASE STAND

Priest: Pray, brethren, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

**All: 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.**

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

HOLY

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, hosanna in the highest.