



# 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.



## 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 Isaiah 11: 1 - 10

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

A shoot springs from the stock of Jesse, a scion thrusts from his roots: on him the spirit of the Lord rests, a spirit of wisdom and insight, a spirit of counsel and power, a spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.

(The fear of the Lord is his breath.) He does not judge by appearances, he gives no verdict on hearsay, but judges the wretched with integrity, and with equity gives a verdict for the poor of the land.

His word is a rod that strikes the ruthless; his sentences bring death to the wicked. Integrity is the loincloth round his waist, faithfulness the belt about his hips.

The wolf lives with the lamb, the panther lies down with the kid, calf and lion cub feed together with a little boy to lead them.

The cow and the bear make friends their young lie down together. The lion eats straw like the ox. The infant plays over the cobra's hole;

into the viper's lair the young child puts his hand. They do no hurt, no harm, on all my holy mountain,

for the country is filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters swell the sea.

That day, the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples. It will be sought out by the nations and its home will be glorious.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps. 71:1-2.7-8.12-13.17

R. In his days justice shall flourish and peace till the moon fails.

- O God, give your judgement to the king, to a king's son your justice, that he may judge your people in justice and your poor in right judgement. [R]
- In his days justice shall flourish and peace till the moon fails. He shall rule from sea to sea, from the Great River to earth's bounds. [R]
- For he shall save the poor when they cry and the needy who are helpless. He will have pity on the weak and save the lives of the poor. [R]
- May his name be blessed for ever and endure like the sun. Every tribe shall be blessed in him, all nations bless his name. [R]

## SECOND READING Romans 15:4-9

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

Everything that was written long ago in the scriptures was meant to teach us something about hope from the examples scripture gives of how people who did not give up were helped by God. And may he who helps us when we refuse to give up, help you all to be tolerant with each other, following the example of Christ Jesus, so that united in mind and voice you may give glory to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It can only be to God's glory, then, for you to treat each other in the same friendly way as Christ treated you. The reason Christ became the servant of circumcised Jews was not only so that God could faithfully carry out the promises made to the patriarchs, it was also to get the pagans to give glory to God for his mercy, as scripture says in one place: For this I shall praise you among the pagans and sing to your name.

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 Matthew 3: 1 - 12

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

In due course John the Baptist appeared; he preached in the wilderness of Judaea and this was his message: 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand'. This was the man the prophet Isaiah spoke of when he said:

A voice cries in the wilderness: Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight.

This man John wore a garment made of camel-hair with a leather belt round his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem and all Judaea and the whole Jordan district made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. But when he saw a number of Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism he said to them, 'Brood of vipers, who warned you to fly from the retribution that is coming? But if you are repentant, produce the appropriate fruit, and do not presume to tell yourselves, "We have Abraham for our father," because, I tell you, God can raise children for Abraham from these stones. Even now the axe is laid to the roots of the trees, so that any tree which fails to produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown on the fire. I baptise you in water for repentance, but the one who follows me is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to carry his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fan is in his hand; he will clear his threshing-floor and gather his wheat into the barn; but the chaff he will burn in a fire that will never go out.'

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, 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.

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.

## EUCHARISTIC 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. We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection 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. Go in peace. Thanks be to God.



John the Baptist preached repentance. "Repent, for the Kingdom of God is close at hand." (Matt 3 v2). Today, "to repent" generally means "to be sorry for our sins." Most of us can identify with that and examine our lives to see what adjustments (usually minor!) which we need to make. But "to repent" as attributed in the Gospel to John, was far more radical than that. It meant to turn your life completely around, to do a U-turn, to turn away from where you are going and turn back to God.

Today, as we accelerate towards climate catastrophe, John's radical message is more apt than ever, particularly to those of us who live in the economically developed world. Our pursuit of continuous - but ultimately unsustainable - economic growth, as we seek to maintain, or even expand, our comfort zones, through our attachment to ever increasing consumer goods, and our need to obtain the money to pay for them, is destroying God's creation. We are called today to "turn around." to turn away from seeking more and more, to live much simpler lives, and to find our rest, not in or possessions, but in God.

Fr. Peter McVerry SJ

## Jesus' Story

Fr. Liam Hickey



John the Baptist came to tell people about Jesus, who was the Face of God's Love. He gathered people around a river and blessed them. We can always pray wherever we are. At Mass we are always reminded of ways God is present for us everyday, everywhere.