

Entrance Antiphon: After the Lord was baptized, the heavens were opened, and the Spirit descended upon him like a dove, and the voice of the Father thundered: This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.

First Reading *Isaiah 40:1-5. 9-11*

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

‘Console my people, console them’ says your God.

‘Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her that her time of service is ended, that her sin is atoned for, that she has received from the hand of the Lord double punishment for all her crimes.’

A voice cries, ‘Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord.

Make a straight highway for our God across the desert.

Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low, let every cliff become a plain, and the ridges a valley; then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all mankind shall see it; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.’

Go up on a high mountain, joyful messenger to Zion.

Shout with a loud voice, joyful messenger to Jerusalem.

Shout without fear, say to the towns of Judah,

‘Here is your God.’

Here is the Lord coming with power, his arm subduing all things to him.

The prize of his victory is with him, his trophies all go before him.

He is like a shepherd feeding his flock, gathering lambs in his arms,

holding them against his breast and leading to their rest the mother ewes.

The Word of the Lord

ALL: Thanks be to God

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 103:1-2. 3-4. 24-25. 27-30.

(R) Oh, bless the Lord, my soul!

Lord God, how great you are, clothed in majesty and glory, wrapped in light as in a robe!
You stretch out the heavens like a tent. **(R)**

Above the rains you build your dwelling.

You make the clouds your chariot, you walk on the wings of the wind, you make the winds your messengers and flashing fire your servants. **(R)**

How many are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have made them all.

The earth is full of your riches. There is the sea, vast and wide, with its moving swarms past counting, living things great and small. **(R)**

All of these look to you to give them their food in due season.

You give it, they gather it up: you open your hand, they have their fill. **(R)**

You take back your spirit, they die, returning to the dust from which they came. You send forth your spirit, and you renew the face of the earth. **(R)**

Second Reading *Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7*

A reading from the letter of St Paul to Titus

God’s grace has been revealed, and it has made salvation possible for the whole human race and taught us that what we have to do is to give up everything that does not lead to God, and all our worldly ambitions; we must be self-restrained and live good and religious lives here in this present world, while we are waiting in hope for the blessing which will come with the Appearing of the glory of our great God and saviour Christ Jesus. He sacrificed himself for us in order to set us free from all wickedness and to purify a people so that it could be his very own and would have no ambition except to do good. When the kindness and love of God our saviour for mankind were revealed, it was not because he was concerned with any righteous actions we might have done ourselves; it was for no reason except his own compassion that he saved us, by means of the cleansing water of rebirth and by renewing us with the Holy Spirit which he has so generously poured over us through Jesus Christ our saviour. He did this so that we should be justified by his grace, to become heirs looking forward to inheriting eternal life.

The Word of the Lord

ALL: Thanks be to God

Alleluia, alleluia!

John said: He who is to come is mightier than I; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. **Alleluia!**

Gospel *Luke 3:15-16, 21-22*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

A feeling of expectancy had grown among the people, who were beginning to think that John might be the Christ, so John declared before them all, ‘I baptise you with water, but someone is coming, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire.’

Now when all the people had been baptised and while Jesus after his own baptism was at prayer, heaven opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily shape, like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, ‘You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you.’

The Gospel of the Lord

ALL: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ



Reflection

Dianne Bergant CSS

The optional readings for this feast recapitulate the themes of the entire Advent-Christmas season. Within the Christian tradition the voice that announces the future events is associated with John the Baptist. However, the reading itself proclaims the coming and manifestation of the Lord, clearly an Advent theme. The gospel reading from Luke moves us from anticipation of the coming of the messiah to fulfilment of God’s promise. This theme of fulfilment is at the heart of the Christmas message. In the baptism narrative we see that Jesus has come into our midst, not only as a helpless infant, but as our anointed messiah. There is a dimension to this same gospel reading that opens us to a future yet to be fully realised in our lives. The one upon whom the Spirit descends has come to baptise us in that same Spirit. The reading from Titus is similar to the gospel. Both herald the appearance of Jesus and promise a future fulfilment for us. Renewed by the Spirit, we will be justified and become heirs in hope of eternal life. The readings clearly announce that: the is coming; the has come; the will continue to come to and through us into the whole world. Under all of this rings the melody of God’s creative power as seen in the Psalm response. In view of the Isaian passage, God promises to create something new in the wilderness of chaos. There the glory of the will be revealed.

Wedding 11th January

Two shall become one

Avneesha Hunjon & Jarrod Martins



Baptisms 12/13th January

We welcome these children into God’s family and our parish community

Emma Grujica, Harriet Bourke,

William Bourke, Harvey Huynh



Mass Intentions

Saturday 12th 8.00am

Domingas de Corvalho	(Anniv)
Teresa Barros Hau	(Anniv)
Maria Vicente Neves	(Rec. dec)

Sunday 13th 7.30am

Germaine Betsey	(Anniv)
-----------------	---------



God's Love Story

One day, I woke early in the morning to watch the sunrise. Ah, the beauty of God's creation is beyond description. As I watched, I praised God for His beautiful work. As I sat there, I felt the Lord's presence with me.

He asked me, "Do you **love** me?" I answered, "Of course, God! You are my Lord and Saviour!"

Then He asked, "If you were physically **handicapped**, would you still love me?"

I was perplexed. I looked down upon my arms, legs and the rest of my body and wondered how many things I wouldn't be able to do — the things that I took for granted? And I answered, "It would be tough Lord, but I would still love You."

Then the Lord said, "If you were **blind**, would you still love my creation?"

How could I love something without being able to see it? Then I thought of all the blind people in the world and how many of them still loved God and His creation. So I answered, "Its hard to think of it, but I would still love you."

The Lord then asked me, "If you were **deaf**, would you still listen to my word?"

How could I listen to anything being deaf? Then I understood. Listening to God's Word is not merely using our ears, but our hearts. I answered, "It would be tough, but I would still listen to Your word."

The Lord then asked, "If you were **mute**, would you still praise My Name?"

How could I praise without a voice? Then it occurred to me: God wants us to sing from our very heart and soul. It never matters what we sound like. And praising God is not always with a song, but when we are persecuted, we give God praise with our words of thanks. So I answered, "Though I could not physically sing, I would still praise Your Name."

And the Lord asked, "**Do you really love Me?**"

With courage and a strong conviction, I answered boldly, "Yes Lord! I love You because You are the one and true God!" I thought I had answered well, but God asked, "THEN WHY DO YOU SIN?"

I answered, "Because I am only human. I am not perfect."

**"THEN WHY IN TIMES OF PEACE DO YOU STRAY THE FURTHEST?
WHY ONLY IN TIMES OF TROUBLE DO YOU PRAY IN EARNEST?"**

No answers — only tears.

The Lord continued: "Why only sing at fellowships and retreats? Why seek Me only in times of worship? Why ask things so selfishly? Why ask things so unfaithfully?"

The tears continued to roll down my cheeks.

"Why are you ashamed of Me? Why are you not spreading the good news? Why in times of persecution, you cry to others when I offer My shoulder to cry on? Why make excuses when I give you opportunities to serve in My Name?"

I tried to answer, but there was no answer to give.

"You are blessed with life. I made you not to throw this gift away. I have blessed you with talents to serve Me, but you continue to turn away. I have revealed My Word to you, but you do not gain in knowledge. I have spoken to you but your ears were closed. I have shown My blessings to you, but your eyes were turned away. I have sent you servants, but you sat idly by as they were pushed away. I have heard your prayers and I have answered them all."

DO YOU TRULY LOVE ME ?"

I could not answer. How could I? I was embarrassed beyond belief. I had no excuse. What could I say to this? My heart had cried out and the tears had flowed, I said, "Please forgive me Lord. I am unworthy to be Your child."

The Lord answered, "**That is My Grace, My child.**"

I asked, " Then why do you continue to forgive me? Why do You love me so?"

The Lord answered, "Because you are My creation. You are my child. I will never abandon you. When you cry, I will have compassion and cry with you. When you shout with joy, I will laugh with you. When you are down, I will encourage you. When you fall, I will raise you up. When you are tired, I will carry you. I will be with you till the end of days, and I will love you forever."

Never had I cried so hard before. How could I have been so cold? How could I have hurt God as I had done?

I asked God, "How much do You love me?"

The Lord stretched out His arms, and I saw His nail-pierced hands. I bowed down at the feet of Christ, my Saviour.

