

## ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

**Drop down dew from above, you heavens, and let the clouds rain down the Just One; let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.**

## COLLECT

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord, your grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son was made known by the message of an Angel, may by his Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of his Resurrection. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

## FIRST READING 7:1-5.8-12.14.16

*A reading from the second book of Samuel*

Once David had settled into his house and the Lord had given him rest from all the enemies surrounding him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, 'Look, I am living in a house of cedar while the ark of God dwells in a tent'. Nathan said to the king, 'Go and do all that is in your mind, for the Lord is with you'.

But that very night the word of the Lord came to Nathan:

'Go and tell my servant David, "Thus the Lord speaks: Are you the man to build me a house to dwell in? I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be leader of my people Israel; I have been with you on all your expeditions; I have cut off all your enemies before you. I will give you fame as great as the fame of the greatest on earth. I will provide a place for my people Israel; I will plant them there and they shall dwell in that place and never be disturbed again; nor shall the wicked continue to oppress them as they did, in the days when I appointed judges over my people Israel; I will give them rest from all their enemies. The Lord will make you great; the Lord will make you a House. And when your days are ended and you are laid to rest with your ancestors, I will preserve the offspring of your body after you and make his sovereignty secure. I will be a father to him and he a son to me. Your House and your sovereignty will always stand secure before me and your throne be established for ever.'

*The word of the Lord.*

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps88

**Response:**

**I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord.**

1. I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord; through all ages my mouth will proclaim your truth.

Of this I am sure, that your love lasts for ever, that your truth is firmly established as the heavens. (R.)

2. 'I have made a covenant with my chosen one;

I have sworn to David my servant:

I will establish your dynasty for ever and set up your throne through all ages.' (R.)

3. He will say to me: 'You are my father, my God, the rock who saves me.'

I will keep my love for him always; for him my covenant shall endure. (R.)

## SECOND READING 16:25-27

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

Glory to him who is able to give you the strength to live according to the Good News I preach, and in which I proclaim Jesus Christ, the revelation of a mystery kept secret for endless ages, but now so clear that it must be broadcast to pagans everywhere to bring them to the obedience of faith. This is only what scripture has predicted, and it is all part of the way the eternal God wants things to be. He alone is wisdom; give glory therefore to him through Jesus Christ for ever and ever. Amen.

*The word of the Lord.*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

**I am the handmaid of the Lord:  
let what you have said be done to me.  
Alleluia!**

## GOSPEL 1:26-38

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke*

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?' 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you' the angel answered 'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God' 'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary 'let what you have said be done to me.' And the angel left her.

*The Gospel of the Lord.*

## PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May the Holy Spirit, O Lord, sanctify these gifts laid upon your altar, just as he filled

with his power the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Through Christ our Lord.

## COMMUNION ANTIPHON

**Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and his name will be called Emmanuel.**

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Having received this pledge of eternal redemption, we pray, almighty God, that, as the feast day of our salvation draws ever nearer, so we may press forward all the more eagerly to the worthy celebration of the mystery of your Son's Nativity. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

## GOSPEL REFLECTION



Do you believe that God communicates with the faithful today? Why or why not? Can you think of any examples where God intervened directly in your life, or in the life of someone you know?

**How do you respond when God asks difficult things of you? Do you believe that God asks of us only what we are capable of doing?**

Do you carry Jesus with you when you go out into the world? How do others know this? How do you reveal Jesus to others? How do you recognise Jesus in other people?

**What does the kingdom of God mean to you? Does it exist here and now? How can you help bring about the kingdom?**

Do you put your trust in the Holy Spirit? **Can living out the gospel become almost second nature to you? How can you learn to trust God more? How can you learn to let go and follow his will?**

What does this Gospel reading have to do with Christmas?

## GOSPEL ACTION

Find the courage this week to reach out to someone in a difficult situation, trust in the Holy Spirit to guide you. Pray for the grace to follow God's plan for you. Take stock of your spiritual preparation for Christmas.

## Readings – The HOLY FAMILY in YR B

**First Reading:** Ecclesiasticus 3:2-6. 12-14

**Second Reading:** Colossians 3:12-21

**Gospel:** Luke 2.22-40

## Homily

20<sup>th</sup> December 2020 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent, Year B

Dear friends, on this final Sunday of Advent the season of preparation draws to a close. After focussing on John the Baptist for the last couple of weeks, Mary now takes centre stage.

We hear in the Gospel the wonderful account of the Annunciation. We celebrate the extravagant love of God who chose Mary to be the mother of his beloved Son. God's choice of Mary made her **"full of grace"**. If grace is God's gift, Mary was full of God's gifts and Mary was to bear the greatest gift that has ever been given, the gift of His only Son, Our Lord Jesus.

Mary had total freedom in her response. She was a poor, young, teenage girl who was deeply disturbed at the words of the angel, **"Rejoice, so highly favoured, the Lord is with you, do not be afraid, you have won God's favour"**. I wonder how Mary really felt? I'm sure she was confused, I don't think at that stage she probably really understood what was being asked of her and what she was agreeing to, but her response was total and unconditional, *"I am the handmaid of the Lord, let what you have said be done to me."*

Mary's great faith, as the handmaid of the Lord, enabled her to respond in the way that she did to say yes to the Angel who was delivering God's message.

Like Mary God chooses each one of us and we too are challenged to say yes to God in our lives. God has chosen us and he has a role for each of us.

I believe God's beautiful words spoken to Mary are spoken to each one of us today on this 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent. This Christmas we are invited to **Rejoice** because we too are highly favoured. The Lord is with you, the Lord is with me, the Lord is with us in a very special way at Christmas time.

Let us rejoice and be glad this Christmas as we celebrate the Incarnation, the birth of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus, the one who brings light and hope into the darkness of the world.

Sending my love and prayers to you all at this special and holy time,  
God bless, **Fr Phil x**

## **Bidding Prayers and Spiritual Communion**

### **20<sup>th</sup> December 2020 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent, Year B**

On this final Sunday of Advent the Lord is very near and we offer our prayers to the Father:

For the Church and for Christians everywhere: may they follow Mary's example by saying yes to the Lord this Christmas time.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Amanda Buckley who has been received into the Church today; may she continue to grow stronger in faith encouraged and supported by the Parish community. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For all victims and survivors of abuse: may we as a Church listen attentively to them and help them find healing and peace in their lives.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For those who are sick, especially those affected by the coronavirus; may they know the grace and healing of Jesus.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For those who are hungry and the poor in our world this Christmas; may we put our faith into action and be generous in sharing what we have with those who are less fortunate than we are. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For peace this Christmas and an end to injustice, war and violence everywhere. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For all the faithful departed especially **Dougie Laverie, Mal Charles** and all those who have died recently: **"Eternal rest grant unto them..."**

For those who mourn the loss of loved ones this Christmas; may Christ's message of hope in eternal life bring them comfort and consolation.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We ask Our Lady and all the Saints to join their prayers with ours as we say: **"Hail Mary..."**

God our loving Father,

As we come ever closer to the celebration of the birth of your Son, we ask you to hear the prayers that we offer through Jesus Christ our Lord,

**Amen.**

**Bidding Prayers and Spiritual Communion**  
**20<sup>th</sup> December 2020 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent, Year B**

**Spiritual Communion**

*Prayer of St Alphonsus*

My Jesus,  
I believe that you are present in this Holy Sacrament of the altar.  
I love you above all things and  
I passionately desire to receive you into my soul.  
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,  
come spiritually into my soul  
so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and forever.  
Amen.