

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.

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 Baruch 5:1-9

A reading from the prophet Baruch.

Jerusalem, take off your dress of sorrow and distress, put on the beauty of the glory of God for ever, wrap the cloak of the integrity of God around you, put the diadem of the glory of the Eternal on your head: since God means to show your splendour to every nation under heaven, since the name God gives you for ever will be, 'Peace through integrity, and honour through devotedness'.

Arise, Jerusalem, stand on the heights and turn your eyes to the east: see your sons reassembled from west and east at the command of the Holy One, jubilant that God has remembered them.

Though they left you on foot, with enemies for an escort, now God brings them back to you like royal princes carried back in glory.

For God has decreed the flattening of each high mountain, of the everlasting hills, the filling of the valleys to make the ground level so that Israel can walk in safety under the glory of God. And the forests and every fragrant tree will provide shade for Israel at the command of God; for God will guide Israel in joy by the light of his glory with his mercy and integrity for escort.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps. 125

**R. What marvels the Lord worked for us!
 Indeed we were glad.**

1. When the Lord delivered Zion from bondage, it seemed like a dream.
 Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
 on our lips there were songs. **[R]**
2. The heathens themselves said:
 'What marvels the Lord worked for them!
 What marvels the Lord worked for us!
 Indeed we were glad. **[R]**

3. Deliver us, O Lord, from our bondage as streams in dry land.
 Those who are sowing in tears will sing when they reap. **[R]**

4. They go out, they go out, full of tears, carrying seed for the sowing: they come back, they come back, full of song, carrying their sheaves. **[R]**

SECOND READING Philippians 1:3-6.8-11

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

Every time I pray for all of you, I pray with joy, remembering how you have helped to spread the Good News from the day you first heard it right up to the present. I am quite certain that the One who began this good work in you will see that it is finished when the Day of Christ Jesus comes. God knows how much I miss you all, loving you as Christ Jesus loves you. My prayer is that your love for each other may increase more and more and never stop improving your knowledge and deepening your perception so that you can always recognise what is best. This will help you to become pure and blameless, and prepare you for the Day of Christ, when you will reach the perfect goodness which Jesus Christ produces in us for the glory and praise of God.

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 Luke 3:1-6

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar's reign, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of the lands of Iturea and Trachonitis, Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. He went through the whole Jordan district proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the sayings of the prophet Isaiah:

A voice cries in the wilderness:

Prepare a way for the Lord,
 make his paths straight.
 Every valley will be filled in,
 every mountain and hill be laid low,
 winding ways will be straightened
 and rough roads made smooth.

And all mankind shall see the salvation of God.

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



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 and our fellow sisters and brothers.

Lene Nanthabwe's community in Machinga, Malawi have been provided with ten treadle pumps which are irrigating five hectares of land for forty four households. Photo: Alan Whelan/Trócaire.



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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,

**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.

AFTER THE CONSECRATION

The mystery of faith.
When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.

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.



We continue our Advent preparation for the coming of Christ at Christmas. Today's gospel tells us of John the Baptist preparing for the coming of Christ as he is beginning his public life of preaching and teaching. It describes John as a voice crying in the wilderness asking his listeners to prepare the way for the Lord.

Are there any voices today asking you and I to listen and prepare the way for the Lord? I suggest that there are millions of such voices crying in the wilderness of poverty asking us to listen to their voices.

Trócaire was set up in the early 1970's by the Irish Church to listen to those voices crying in the wilderness of poverty. It continues to respond to those voices by offering immediate relief, by education and human development. What better way could we prepare for this Christmas than to listen to those voices crying in the wilderness of poverty than to gift to Trócaire or other such charities.

John the Baptist was a voice crying in the wilderness preparing for the coming of Christ.

The same Christ is present today in and through those voices crying in the wilderness of poverty. As Christians we are challenged to listen to their cries.

Willie Walsh
 Bishop Emeritus Killaloe