



Bringing Home the Word

Second Sunday of Advent (C)
December 8, 2024

And the Word Was Made Flesh

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

Many of us grew up thinking that this life doesn't amount to much. It's full of pitfalls and enticements that threaten our eternal salvation. Such disdain often boils over into contempt for the world. According to this thinking, it is only the next life that is important, which will unfold in a much better place. Today's readings challenge such extreme thinking. They assure us that the glory of God is partially revealed to us even within this life. They astound us by insisting that God speaks to us through life's events—events that often appear to be quite mundane.

Sunday Readings

Baruch 5:1-9

Jerusalem, take off your robe of mourning and misery; put on forever the splendor of glory from God.

Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11

Discern what is of value, so that you may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ.

Luke 3:1-6

John went throughout the whole region of the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

Baruch tells of Jerusalem, the city loved passionately by every Israelite. This was a city like so many other cities. However, God dwelt there, and wherever God dwells is, for that reason, a holy city—be it is Jerusalem, Munich, or Detroit. God dwells in our midst, right here, right now. Hence, this imperfect life and this damaged world are holy.

The gospel situates John the Baptist in the middle of the ancient Near Eastern world. It was a Roman world controlled by Caesar and a Jewish province ruled by Herod. John stated that it was to that place at that time that the Promised One would come, and it was up to John to "prepare the way of the LORD" (Isaiah 40:3; Luke 3:4).

Most importantly, we must never forget that God took on the troubles and sins of this world and entered our life, making it his life. This is the real reason this world is holy. †



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A Word from Pope Francis

We are in the age of walls and barbed wire. To be sure, we can appreciate people's fears and insecurities, the difficulties and dangers involved, and the general sense of fatigue and frustration, exacerbated by the economic and pandemic crises. Yet, problems are not resolved, and coexistence improved by building walls higher, but by joining forces to care for others...

ADDRESS TO REFUGEES,
MYTILENE, GREECE, DECEMBER 5, 2021



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- What do I most value?
- How do my actions reflect my values?



Prayer Before the Blessed Sacrament

Saint Alphonsus Liguori

My sacramental Savior and divine Love, how full of kindness and tenderness are the means your love has invented to win over the love of souls. Eternal Word, you were not satisfied with becoming human and dying for us; you have also given us the Blessed Sacrament as a companion, as food, and as a reassurance of heaven. At one time, you show yourself to us as an infant in a stable, at another, as a poor man in a workshop, then as a criminal on a cross, and now as bread on an altar. Tell me, is there anything else you could do to win over our love? Infinite Goodness, when shall I really begin to be in accord with such a refinement of love?

Lord, I wish to live for the one purpose of loving you alone. And what use is life to me if I do not spend it entirely in loving and pleasing you, my beloved Redeemer, who has given your whole life for me? And what have I to love if not you, who are all beauty and grace, all goodness and love and worthy of love? May I live only to love you. May the simple memory of your love make my heart tender with that love. May the very words crib and cross and sacrament set it on fire with the wish to do great things for you, my Jesus, who have indeed done so much and suffered so greatly for me. †

This reflection is an excerpt from *Visits to the Blessed Sacrament and Our Lady* by Saint Alphonsus Liguori, Liguori Publications (828706). Visit Liguori.org for other spiritual reading.

Wisdom from Catholic UPDATE

From "The Christmas Crèche: A Franciscan Tradition" by Kathleen M. Carroll

I can relate to the image of Mary bent over her infant son in the Christmas crèche, marveling at this new life. But unlike that most perfect of mothers, I can well imagine what would fill my thoughts: *You put your newborn child in what? With all of those smelly animals around? What kind of mother are you? Surely, if any mother was "good enough," Mary must have known herself worthy of that label. But to be the mother of such a Son? And what was good enough for that child? To be born without an earthly father? To spend his first night on a bed of straw? The miracle of birth is too much for any of us to understand, but the miracle of this birth was on a different scale altogether. Mary did well to ponder these things in her heart.*

Catholic Update—a subscription newsletter published eleven times a year—explores Church tradition and teaching on contemporary topics. Liguori.org • 800-325-9521.



Lord Jesus, so that this season may inspire respectful dialogue among those who disagree, we pray:

Be born in us,
be born in our world.

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

December 9–14

Monday, Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary: Gn 3:9–15, 20 / Eph 1:3–6, 11–12 / Lk 1:26–38

Tuesday, Advent Weekday: Is 40:1–11 / Mt 18:12–14

Wednesday, Advent Weekday: Is 40:25–31 / Mt 11:28–30

Thursday, Our Lady of Guadalupe:

Zec 2:14–17 or Rv 11:19a; 12:1–6a, 10ab / Lk 1:26–38 or Lk 1:39–47

Friday, St. Lucy: Is 48:17–19 / Mt 11:16–19

Saturday, St. John of the Cross:

Sir 48:1–4, 9–11 / Mt 17:9a, 10–13