



USC Caruso
Catholic Center

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Family Prayer Service

Presider: In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit

Let us acknowledge the times which we have not been faithful to God.

Penitential Rite A

All: I confess to almighty God
and to you, my brothers and sisters,
that I have greatly sinned,
in my thoughts and in my words,
in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,

(striking your breast, say:)

through my fault, through my fault,
through my most grievous fault;

(Then continue with:)

therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,
all the Angels and Saints,
and you, my brothers and sisters,
to pray for me to the Lord our God.

Opening Prayer:

Presider:

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 Savior.

All: Amen

A Reading from the Second book of Samuel:

2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16

When King David was settled in his palace, and the LORD had given him rest from his enemies on every side, he said to Nathan the prophet, “Here I am living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God dwells in a tent!” Nathan answered the king, “Go, do whatever you have in mind, for the LORD is with you.” But that night the LORD spoke to Nathan and said: “Go, tell my servant David, “Thus says the LORD: Should you build me a house to dwell in?”

“It was I who took you from the pasture and from the care of the flock to be commander of my people Israel. I have been with you wherever you went, and I have destroyed all your enemies before you. And I will make you famous like the great ones of the earth. I will fix a place for my people Israel; I will plant them so that they may dwell in their place without further disturbance. Neither shall the wicked continue to afflict them as they did of old, since the time I first appointed judges over my people Israel. I will give you rest from all your enemies. The LORD also reveals to you that he will establish a house for you. And when your time comes and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your heir after you, sprung from your loins, and I will make his kingdom firm. I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me. Your house and your kingdom shall endure forever before me; your throne shall stand firm forever.”

The Word of the Lord

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 89:2-3, 4-5, 27, 29 (2a)

R. Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

The promises of the LORD I will sing forever; through all generations my mouth shall proclaim your faithfulness. For you have said, “My kindness is established forever”; in heaven you have confirmed your faithfulness.

R. Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

“I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to David my servant: forever will I confirm your posterity and establish your throne for all generations.”

R. Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

“He shall say of me, ‘You are my father, my God, the rock, my savior.’ Forever I will maintain my kindness toward him, and my covenant with him stands firm.”

R. Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

A Reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans:

Romans 16:25-27

Brothers and sisters:

To him who can strengthen you, according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret for long ages but now manifested through the prophetic writings and, according to the command of the eternal God, made known to all nations to bring about the obedience of faith, to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ be glory forever and ever. Amen.

The Word of the Lord

Alleluia:

Luke 1:38

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

A Reading from the Holy Gospel According to John:

Luke 1:26-38

The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, "Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you." But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God."

"Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." But Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" And the angel said to her in reply, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God." Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

The Gospel of the Lord

Reflection/Family Discussion on the readings and Gospel:

by Deacon Paul Pesqueira

As we celebrate the Fourth Sunday of Advent, I pray you have searched out and experienced hope, love, and joy the past three weeks. This week, the theme for the Fourth Sunday of Advent is *Peace*. Peace is a crucial part of our lives because if we do not have peace in our heart and in our lives, how can hope, love and joy increase? There has been so much uncertainty this past year, and it has been difficult for me to have a consistent sense of peace in my life. I continue to seek the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ daily. 2020 has been challenging and I find myself still in search of peace. How is your search for peace going this year?

The Gospel of Luke this week tells the story of the encounter with the Archangel Gabriel and a young woman named Mary. Mary is greatly troubled by this encounter and what was said to her. There is no peace, just confusion within Mary. She questions Gabriel. What thoughts are going through Mary's mind? How could she understand what *full of grace* means and that the *Lord is with her*? On December 8th, the Roman Catholic Church celebrated the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception - Mary was conceived without original sin. I am sure Mary was unaware of this. "Do not be afraid Mary you have found favor with God," Gabriel extends this statement in order to bring peace to Mary, and hopefully lessen her confusion. Mary trusts what Gabriel says and moves toward her great *fiat!*

As I have reflected on Mary's 'yes', I feel dejected at times because of my uncertainty. I keep telling myself God will not, and has not, abandoned me. I need to trust God in all things that occur in my life, "Lord I trust in you!" The Divine Mercy prayer is something I say throughout my day, especially when doubt arises in my life. The way I lead my life is one of a servant. I do my very best to serve Christ and His Church. I do my best to serve the people of God. There are times that I feel like I fail miserably. Perhaps like you during this 2020 year, I have experienced doubt and weakness. I continue to move forward, I am persistent. My movement toward God has been filled with hills and valleys, pain and doubt. To quote Elton John, "I'm still standing after all this time." I am still standing, but I fall to my knees in prayer as well. We are still here in search of God. Whether it is online with a Zoom or Facebook live Mass or if we are lucky to join Mass in person. Like Mary, God is with me and us. I believe with all my heart and soul that God sends us angels in our lives. Do I recognize the angels in my life, or do I allow fear and doubt to blind me? Do you recognize the angels in your life?

As Advent comes to a close, the beautiful themes of Hope, Love, Joy and Peace are just not words. These words need to be lived out with the understanding that no matter where you are at or where you will go, remember that God is with you. If we trust in the Lord, Hope, Love, Joy and Peace can and will increase in our lives. Please search these Advent themes. Do not wait until the next Advent season to think about these matters. I am a human being filled with emotion; it sometimes spills out of me. I need to continue to seek out the intercession of Our Blessed Mother. The Immaculate Conception, Our Lady of Guadalupe. I need to take all my emotion, and all that I am, and place it before the Mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Mary gave us the gift of the child Jesus because she trusted in the messenger that God sent her. Let us put our trust in the Lord. *Marana Tha*, Come Lord Jesus.

Nicene Creed:

ALL: 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,

(bow)

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

(raise from bow)

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

Presider: In joyful anticipation of the Lord's coming at Christmas, let us join our hearts and voices in prayer.

Intercessions:

1. For our Church and parish community, that we may joyfully respond to the will of God with the faith and trust of Mary:
(Pause for silent prayer).
All: Lord, hear us.

2. For all pastors and ministers of our church, that they may reveal, in their humble and dedicated service, the mystery of God's great love for all humanity:
(Pause for silent prayer).
All: Lord, hear us.

3. For the nations and peoples of the world, that the reign God's peace may be established forever:
(Pause for silent prayer).
All: Lord, hear us.

4. For all parents and guardians of children, that they may see in Mary a model of patience and selfless devotion:
(Pause for silent prayer).
All: Lord, hear us.

5. For those who do not celebrate Christ's birth, that they, too, may know the joy and peace of the messiah's coming:
(Pause for silent prayer).
All: Lord, hear us.

6. For our deceased relatives and friends, that they may dwell forever in the house of God:
(Pause for silent prayer).
All: Lord, hear us.

Presider:

Come, Lord God, shatter the darkness of our world with the light of your love. May these prayers we offer and our work to bring them to fulfillment bring the light and peace of the messiah into our own time and place. We ask this in the name of our hope, Jesus, the Christ.

Our Father:

Presider: At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

All:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

Amen

Sign of Peace:

Presider: Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles: Peace I leave you, my peace I give you; look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your will. Who live and reign for ever and ever.

All: Amen

Presider:

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

All:

And with your spirit.

Presider:

Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

(At this time please offer a moment of silence before the Spiritual Communion is said.)

Spiritual Communion:

All: I wish my Lord, to receive you with the purity, humility and devotion with which your most holy Mother received you, with the spirit and fervor of the saints.

Closing Prayer:

Presider:

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.

All: Amen