



20 December 2017

CHRISTMAS NOVENA – Fifth Day

Year B

The God Who Loves to Be With Us

We believe in a God that is very much involved in the events of our lives and in the history of humankind. His “immersion” in the life of our planet had its climax at the Incarnation, but did not end with the Ascension. Jesus is still “Immanuel,” “God-with-us.” He is our Kuya, our fellow traveler, our mentor, our neighbor, our partner. And this because Mary Most Holy accepted to be his loving and faithful mother.

As we intensify our preparation for the commemoration of Jesus’ birth, let us renew our awareness of his constant presence among us. He is at the door of our hearts, waiting for our “Tuloy po kayo” to come in. Let us open our hearts to him as we are about to start the Eucharistic celebration on this fifth day of our Christmas Novena.



INTRODUCTORY RITES



Entrance Antiphon

(To be recited only when no Entrance Hymn is sung.)

A branch shall sprout from the root of Jesse, and the glory of the Lord will fill the whole earth, and all flesh will see the salvation of God.

Greeting

P –May the God of peace and love who sent His angel to Mary Most Holy be with you all.

All–And with your spirit!

Penitential Act

P –In the presence of Mary, our spiritual mother, who is full of grace, let us realize our unworthiness and the need to be purified by receiving God’s forgiveness. *(Pause)*

P –Lord Jesus, you are the Son of the Eternal Father and of the Virgin Mary. Lord, have mercy!

All–Lord, have mercy!

P –Lord Jesus, you were conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit. Christ, have mercy!

All–Christ, have mercy!

P –Lord Jesus, your reign will be without end. Lord, have mercy!

All–Lord, have mercy!

P –May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life.

All–Amen!

Gloria

All–Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Fa-

ther, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen!

Collect *(Opening Prayer)*

P –O God, eternal majesty, whose ineffable Word the immaculate Virgin received through the message of an Angel and so became the dwelling-place of divinity, filled with the light of the Holy Spirit, grant, we pray, that by her example we may in humility hold fast to your will.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

All–Amen!

LITURGY OF
THE WORD



1st Reading *Is 7:10-14*
The “Immanuel Prophecy,” pronounced by the prophet Isaiah during a deep crisis in the Kingdom of Judah, is one of the best known messianic passages of the Old Testament. The Church sees in it a prophecy of the virginal conception and birth of Jesus by Mary Most Holy.

R –A proclamation from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

The Lord spoke to Ahaz: “Ask for a sign from the Lord, your God; let it be deep as the netherworld, or high as the sky!” But Ahaz answered, “I will not ask! I will not tempt the Lord!” Then Isaiah said: “Listen, O house of David! Is it not enough for you to weary men? Must you also weary my God? Therefore, the Lord himself will give you this sign: the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel.”

The Word of the Lord!
All—Thanks be to God!

Responsorial Psalm *Ps 24*

R —Let the Lord enter; he is the king of glory!

R. M. Velez



* The Lord’s are the earth and its fullness; the world and those who dwell in it. For he founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers.
R.

* Who can ascend the mountain of the Lord? Or who may stand in his holy place? He whose hands are sinless, whose heart is clean, who desires not what is vain.
R.

* He shall receive a blessing from the Lord, a reward from God his savior. Such is the race that seeks for him, that seeks the face of the God of Jacob. **R**

Gospel Acclamation

All—Alleluia! Alleluia!
O, Key of David, opening the gates of God’s eternal Kingdom: come and free the prisoners of darkness!
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Gospel *Lk 1:26-38*

The Annunciation marks the beginning of the fulfillment of the “Immanuel Prophecy” uttered by Isaiah. By giving her assent to God’s plan, Mary Most Holy conceives virginally and will give birth to the long-awaited Messiah.

P —The Lord be with you!
All—And with your spirit!

P —A proclamation from the holy Gospel according to Luke

All—Glory to you, O Lord!

In the sixth month, 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. The virgin’s name was Mary.

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!
All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Homily

Prayer of the Faithful

P —Jesus is our “Immanuel,” God-with-us. His presence among us is a source of consolation and strength. Let us entrust to him our worries and hopes as we pray:

All—Lord Jesus, be with us!

C —Lord Jesus, be with your Church as she constantly strives to bring your Gospel to all and to witness to it in the lives of her members. We pray! **R.**

C —Lord Jesus, be with the Holy Father, our Bishop, our parish priest, and his assistants, that they may be ever more effective ministers of your inspiring guidance. We pray! **R.**

C —Lord Jesus, be with our political and civil leaders, our judges, the police, and the military, that they may effectively promote justice, order, and the common good. We pray! **R.**

C —Lord Jesus, be with our doctors, nurses, and all those who work in the health care ministry, that they may be instruments of your healing love for all the sick. We pray! **R.**

C —Lord Jesus, be with all parents that they may love each other very sincerely and bring up their children as good Christians and honest citizens. We pray! **R.**

C —Let us pray for our personal intentions and the needs

of all the people we love.
(Pause)

R.
We pray!

P –Lord Jesus, be with us to help us overcome all difficulties and build communities that are showcases of the Kingdom where you live and reign for ever and ever.

All–Amen!

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST



Preparation of the Gifts

P –Pray, brethren . . .

All–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

P –Look, O Lord, we pray, upon the one sacrifice of your Son, that, by participating in this mystery, we may possess at last the gifts we have awaited and for which our faith bids us hope.

Through Christ our Lord.
All–Amen!

Preface of Advent II

P –The Lord be with you!

All–And with your spirit!

P –Lift up your hearts!

All–We lift them up to the Lord!

P –Let us give thanks to the Lord our God!

All–It is right and just!

P –It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord.

For all the oracles of the prophets foretold him, the Virgin Mother longed for him with love beyond all telling, John the Baptist sang of his coming and proclaimed his presence when he came.

It is by his gift that already we rejoice at the mystery of his Nativity, so that he may find us watchful in prayer and exultant in his praise.

And so, with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones

and Dominions, and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven, we sing the hymn of your glory, as without end we acclaim:

All–Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!

Memorial Acclamation

P –The mystery of faith!

All–When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again!

COMMUNION RITE



All–Our Father . . .

P –Deliver us, Lord . . .

All–For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever.

Sign of Peace

Breaking of the Bread

All–Lamb of God, you take away the sins of world: have mercy on us. (2x)

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: grant us peace.

Communion

P –Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the Supper of the Lamb.

All–Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Antiphon

(To be recited only when no Communion Hymn is sung.)

The Angel said to Mary: Behold, you will conceive and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus.

Prayer after Communion

P –Grant divine protection, O Lord, to those you renew with this heavenly gift, that

to those who delight in your mysteries you may give the joy of true peace.

Through Christ our Lord.
All–Amen!

CONCLUDING RITES



P –The Lord be with you.

All–And with your spirit!

P –Bow your heads and pray for God’s blessing.

(Pause)

You believe that Jesus is “God-with-us.” May your preparation for his coming bring you the light of his holiness and free you from all evil.

All–Amen!

P –Mary’s availability to do God’s will enabled the Word to become flesh. May you always be ready to do what God wants.

All–Amen!

P –May God make you steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and untiring in love all the days of your life.

All–Amen!

P –May almighty God bless you: the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

All–Amen!

P –Go in peace to love and serve the Lord in your neighbor.

All–Thanks be to God!

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MARY, THE DREAMER

If we are sensitive people, we cannot but feel sorry for the sad outcome of the apparition of the angel Gabriel to Zechariah in the Temple. The poor old man, already emotionally half-dead due to his disappointments in life, at the end of his encounter with the angel saw himself even further isolated because of the loss of his speech. **Old age is not just a matter of having lived many years, but also a matter of having suffered many setbacks and having all but lost hope in the process . . .**

Good for the world that mankind constantly renews itself through the young. **Driven by their idealism and the desire to build a better world, the young are the “visionaries” that refuse to accept the deficiencies of the generation into which they are born.** They dream of a better world, and the best among them are determined to fight and even suffer in order to make their dream a reality.

Maybe this is the reason why, in the pursuit of His plan of salvation through the incarnation of His eternal Son, God did not choose another couple of elderly people – as He did with the parents of John the Baptist – but chose a very young person: Mary of Nazareth.

A virgin and a dreamer – a greater dreamer than all her contemporaries and any other young person that ever walked on our planet – **Mary proved the most suitable “partner” of God in the implementation of the all-important plan to bring about the salvation of mankind.** Mary, the immaculate dreamer, opened herself totally to hear the divine plan which the angel Gabriel (the same who spoke to Zechariah!)

presented to her. She did ask a question, of course, just as Zechariah had done. (*Compare Lk 1:18 with Lk 1:34.*) But, **unlike the old man, Mary’s disposition was one of openness and interest to know more about God’s plan.** Her asking questions did not mean that she was questioning God. Rather, it sprang from the desire to be enlightened so as to be a more effective instrument in the fulfillment of God’s dream/plan.

This is why **her answer** to the divine message was not a disenchanted, doubt-ridden “How can I . . .?”, but **an enthusiastic “YES” which delighted God immensely.** For the first time, after millennia of rejections of God’s plan, on the part of millions of men and women, here was a woman – a young woman! – who found her delight not in seeking the fulfillment of her aspirations away from God’s ways, but in adhering totally and unconditionally to God’s plan. Mary knew it was a plan carved on the walls of His eternal love and readily carved her “AMEN!” at the entrance of her young heart. “I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word. YES na YES! NGAYON AT KAILANMAN!”

An unpublished apocrypha reveals that at that moment, the ever-youthful God smiled with deep satisfaction: finally, He had found in a young human being the suitable partner to rejuvenate the world by giving birth to Jesus, the prototype of the new mankind. And so it came to pass that “the Word became flesh and pitched his tent in our midst.”

Fr. Sal Putzu, SDB

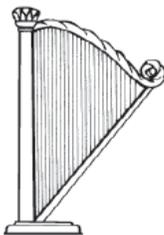
Advent/Christmas Trivia

THE JESSE TREE

An ancient tradition revived in the mid-20th century as an Advent practice, the “Jesse Tree” represents the family of **Jesse**, the father of **King David**. It traces the history of his family line, from **Abraham** up to **Joseph**, the foster father of **Jesus**.

The Gospel of Matthew’s genealogy of Jesus (*Mt 1:1-17*) names a person from each generation before Jesus’ birth. Stories about these people are in the Old Testament. Through the Jesse Tree, we become acquainted with these people, who are the roots of the past. If we understand the essential role they played in the plan of salvation, we share in their hoping, longing, and waiting for the promised Messiah.

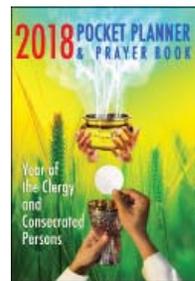
As a visible symbol of this “Jesse Tree,” a small bush or tree branch could be used. On the branches extending from the central branch, hang symbols or ornaments for the characters as



The harp can be used to symbolize David, son of Jesse.

they are studied and their importance is understood. A large paper tree with at least eleven points could also be used. On each point, a name, a symbol, Scripture quotation or paragraph explaining the character’s significance could be placed.

Sources: www.americancatholic.org;
Liturgy of the Word for Children, Sr. Jan Ihli



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Postal Address: P.O. Box 1820, MCPO, 1258 Makati, Metro Manila, Philippines

Tel. Nos. 894-5401; 894-5402; 892-2169 • Telefax: 894-5241 • Website: www.wordandlife.org

• E-mail: marketing@wordandlife.org, wordandlifepublications@gmail.com • FB: Word & Life Publications

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