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.

GREETING

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
And with your spirit.

PENITENTIAL ACT

You were sent to heal the contrite of heart:
Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

You came to call sinners:
Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.

You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us:
Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

May almighty God have mercy on us….
Amen.

(The Gloria is omitted awaiting its Christmas Proclamation.)

OPENING PRAYER

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.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING *2 Samuel 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.
Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM *(Ps 88)*

R. 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. 'With my chosen one I have made a covenant;
   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;
   with him my covenant shall last. ***[R]***

SECOND READING *Romans 16:25-27*

A reading from St. Paul's letter 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.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

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

GOSPEL *Luke 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.
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,
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.

focus on sunday

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT 20th December 2020

Mary accepted the life of God into her womb through the power of the Holy Spirit thus bringing God's salvation into the world. Let us open our hearts to welcoming Jesus into our lives this Christmas.

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

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.

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right and just.

SANCTUS

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.

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.

INVITATION TO HOLY COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God, …….
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

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.

CONCLUDING RITE

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.
May the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever. Amen.
Go in peace. Thanks be to God.

Focus

'For nothing will be impossible with God.' (Luke 1:37)

Brendan Rodgers is from Ballymena, County Antrim. He is a former player and coach of several football teams in the past including as a manager for Watford, Reading, Swansea, Liverpool and Celtic. He is the present manager of Leicester Football Club. In the notes of the match programme he always signs off with his characteristic three-word quip: 'Everything is possible; I've always said that you can live without water for a few days, but you can't live a second without hope.'

A woman once said to me, 'I am living with constant tension in my home. I wait in hope for tender looks. All I have is a God who weeps.' Advent is a time to believe and hope in a God who walks in and stays with the brokenness of our lives.

The Gospel is a record of how Jesus enters into the darkness, like the seed growing in the ground, like a God who weeps, so that he can be the living, real presence for others who live with the emotional, spiritual and physical brokenness. In the Gospel, Jesus claims that he is the light that is uncontainable that extinguishes the darkness of loneliness, rejection, alienation and indifference.

Fr John Cullen, Parish Priest Ahascragh, Co Galway and Editor, Intercom.

From Fr Cullen's Alert, Aware, Attentive: Advent Reflections, available from www.messenger.ie/books, €4.95.

Jesus' Story

Fr. Liam Hickey

We listen to The Angeleus Bell because of Mary. She listened to the Angel when God invited her to have The Baby Jesus. It is a good prayer to listen to the sound of the Bell, and let the sound pass through from the top of the head to the little toe of one's foot in silence. It is also good to put a hand on one's heart in silence, during the ringing of The Bell.

Liturgical texts: concordat cum originali: †Diarmuid Martin, Archbishop of Dublin Other texts: cum permissu: †Diarmuid Martin, Archbishop of Dublin. Excerpts from the English translation of the Roman Missal: © 2010,International Committee on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved. Used with permission. The Jerusalem version of the Scripture is copyright Darton, Longman & Todd & Doubleday & Co. Inc. Responsorial psalms are copyright The Grail & or Geoffrey Chapman Ltd.
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