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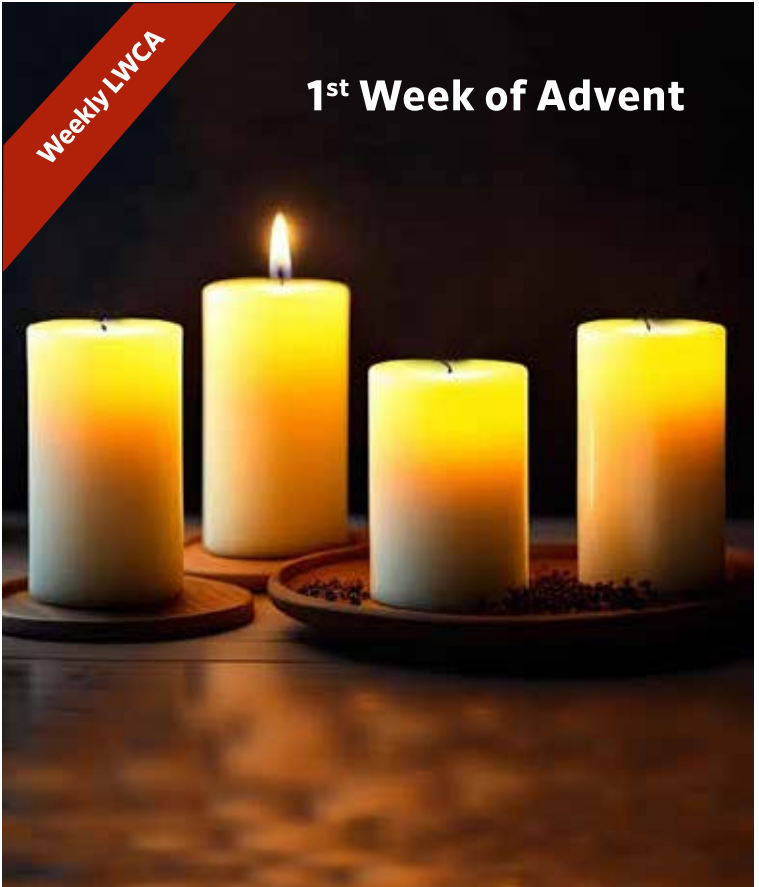
Living with Christ

GROWING UP DAILY WITH THE GOOD NEWS

Weekly LWCA

1st Week of Advent

byard africque



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Liturgical texts:

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On our cover: One candle lit.

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Editorial

December 2023



Rev. Fr. Dennis Opoku, Tema Ghana

First Week of Advent

During this season of Advent, we are invited to set our hearts and minds off the stress of the year and focus ahead with hope and anticipation. Advent, derived from the Latin word “adventus” meaning “coming” or “arrival,” is a significant season in the Church liturgical calendar. It encompasses the four weeks leading up to Christmas, and its primary purpose is to prepare for the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ while reminding believers of Christ’s continuing presence in their lives.

Advent is also a time to prepare spiritually for the arrival of our Lord Jesus Christ, not just as a baby in a manger, but as the eternal source of hope, peace, joy, and love through a deep and personal connection with Him. It’s an opportunity to strengthen our relationship with Christ and to bring the message of hope, peace, joy, and love into our daily life. May the Lord’s advent bring us great renewal and peace. Amen.



The Pope's Prayer Intention

For persons with disabilities : We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the center of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.

Other papal intentions and videos can be found on: <http://apostleshipofprayer.org/>

Liturgical Symbols (II)

In this article, we continue to focus on some liturgical symbols used in the Eucharistic celebration. These symbols find their origin in the Bible as it is the first source of Liturgy.

Incense

According to the Roman Missal, incensation is an expression of reverence and prayer. When we read the Sacred Scriptures, there are many verses that talk about incense. For instance, Psalm 140, 2: **«Accept my prayer as incense offered to you, and my upraised hands as an evening offering»**; Revelation 8,3: **«Another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense to offer, with the prayers of all God's people, on the golden altar in front of the throne»**. During incensation, the smoke goes up. It symbolizes the prayer of the faithful that ascends to God who dwells in heaven.

The Roman Missal states that incense can be used optionally in any form of Mass. It is used during the

entrance procession, at the beginning of Mass to incense the cross and the altar, at the procession before the Gospel and the proclamation of the Gospel, after the bread and the chalice have been placed on the altar, to incense the offerings, the cross, and the altar as well as the priest and the people; and finally at the elevation of the host and the chalice after the Consecration.

The ambo

During the Eucharistic celebration, the ambo is the place from which the word of God is read and explained. It is the table of the Word. The first reading, the second reading and the Gospel are read from the ambo. The responsorial psalm may be sung also from the ambo since it is part of God's Word. The homily is given from the ambo. The ambo can be considered as the place of proclamation of Jesus' resurrection. This can be clearly seen on Holy Saturday when the deacon or the priest sings the **Alleluia** three times before reading the Gospel.

The Altar

The Altar is the center of the Eucharistic Celebration. It symbolizes Jesus Christ himself who, according to

the fifth preface of Easter, is the Priest, the Altar and the Lamb of sacrifice. Therefore, the Altar is not a geographical center but a theological one. The Altar is also referred to as the Table of the Eucharist.

During the Eucharistic celebration, the significance of the altar is clearly seen through all the signs and events that take place on it. The priest kisses the Altar at the beginning and at the end of the Holy Mass, it is while standing at the Altar that the priest recites some prayers in a low voice, the priest incenses it during the offertory, it is on it that the bread becomes the body of Christ and the wine becomes the blood of Christ.

The Table of the Word (ambo) and the Table of the Eucharist (Altar) are indissolubly connected. In fact, the Word that the faithful hear in the first part of the Eucharistic celebration is the same Word that becomes flesh in the second part.

*Rev. Fr. Jérôme K. M. Kombi,
Kinshasa, D.R. Congo*



Sunday December 3

1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

*Isaiah 63:16d-17; 64:1.3b-8. / Psalm 80:1ac and 2b.14-15.17-18.
1Corinthians 1:3-9. / Mark 13:33-37.*



“Watch, therefore; you do not know when the lord of the house is coming ...” (Mark 13:35)



Advent is a time of preparation

Today, we begin the Advent season. Advent is a significant liturgical season in the Catholic Church that marks the beginning of the Church year. It typically lasts for four weeks, beginning on the Sunday nearest to November 30th and concluding on Christmas Eve. Advent is a time of preparation for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, who came into the world to bring salvation to humanity. The church gives us the opportunity to get ready to celebrate and welcome Christ in our lives. That is what Jesus-Christ reminds us through His disciples. In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus shares a profound message emphasizing the importance of vigilance, readiness, and faithfulness in our lives as Christians. He urges us to “Be on guard! Be alert!” This is a call to spiritual alertness and preparedness. Just as the watchman must stay vigilant, we are called to be watchful for the coming of the Lord in our lives. We do not know the day or the hour, so we must live each day as if it were our last, being mindful of our choices and actions.

As Christians, we each have a unique purpose and mission in life. Jesus emphasizes the importance of fulfilling our



Sunday December 3

mission. We should diligently carry out our responsibilities and use the gifts and talents God has bestowed upon us for the service of His kingdom. It's by taking care of the household the Lord has entrusted to us, that's our families, work, mission or apostolate, that we will make Christmas become a joyful encounter with our Lord. During this advent, let us pray for the grace to remain vigilant, fulfill our God-given tasks, and live our lives in a manner that honors and glorifies our Lord, eagerly anticipating His return with faith, hope, and love. Happy Advent!

Rev. Fr. Kahindo Emmanuel, Kenya



Entrance Antiphon (*Ps (24) 25:1-3*)

To you, I lift up my soul, O my God. In you, I have trusted; let me not be put to shame. Nor let my enemies exult over me; and let none who hope in you be put to shame.

Collect

Grant your faithful, we pray, almighty God, the resolve to run forth to meet your Christ with righteous deeds at his coming, so that, gathered at his right hand, they may be worthy to possess the heavenly kingdom. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading (*Isaiah 63:16d-17; 64.1.3b-8*)

A reading from the Book of Isaiah

You, O Lord, are our Father, our Redeemer from old is your name. O Lord, why do you make us err from your ways and harden our heart, so that we do not fear you? Return for the sake of your servants, the tribes of your heritage. O that you would tear the heavens and come down, that the mountains might quake at your presence! You came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear, no eye has seen a God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. You meet him that joyfully works



Sunday December 3

righteousness, those that remember you in your ways. Behold, you were angry, and we sinned; in our sins we have been a long time, and shall we be saved? We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no one that calls upon your name, that bestirs himself to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquities. Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Responsorial Psalm _____
(Psalm (79) 80:1ac and 2b.14-15.17-18.)

Re - store us, O God; let your
face shine that we may be saved.



**R. O God, bring us back;
let your face shine on us, and we shall be saved.**

O shepherd of Israel, hear us,
enthroned on the cherubim, shine forth.
Rouse up your might and come to save us. R.

God of hosts, turn again, we implore;
look down from heaven and see.
Visit this vine and protect it,
the vine your right hand has planted. R.

May your hand be on the man at your right hand,
the son of man you have confirmed as your own.
And we shall never forsake you again;
give us life that we may call upon your name. R.

Second Reading (1 Corinthians 1:3-9) —————

**A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the
Corinthians**

Brethren: Grace to you and peace from God our
Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to God
always for you because of the grace of God which was
given you in Christ Jesus, that in every way you were
enriched in him with all speech and all knowledge



Sunday December 3

-even as the testimony to Christ was confirmed among you- so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ; who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Acclamation (*Psalm (84) 85:7*)

Alleluia. Alleluia. Let us see, O Lord, your mercy and grant us your salvation. **Alleluia.**

Gospel (*Mark 13:33-37*)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples, “Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Watch therefore — for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning — lest he come suddenly



and find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: “Watch.”

The Gospel of Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Prayer of the Faithful

The following intentions are suggestions only.

℟. Lord, hear our prayer.

For the Church, eagerly awaiting the fulfillment of the children of God, we pray to the Lord: ℟.

For the world, longing for its promised salvation, we pray to the Lord: ℟.

For the sorrowing and despairing, the suffering and alienated, the forgotten and overlooked, we pray to the Lord: ℟.

For our parish and our diocese, working together as we await the Lord’s return in glory, we pray to the Lord: ℟.



Sunday December 3

Prayer over the Offerings

Accept, we pray, O Lord, these offerings we make, gathered from among your gifts to us, and may what you grant us to celebrate devoutly here below, gain for us the prize of eternal redemption. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Communion Antiphon (*Ps (84) 85:13*)

The Lord will bestow his bounty, and our earth shall yield its increase.

Prayer after Communion

May these mysteries, O Lord, in which we have participated, profit us, we pray, for even now, as we walk amid passing things, you teach us by them to love the things of heaven and hold fast to what endures. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



Monday December 4

1st Week of Advent

Ferial

Or: St John Damascene

Entrance Antiphon

(Cf Jer 31:10; Is 35:4) **Hear the word of the Lord, O nations; declare it to the distant lands: Behold, our Saviour will come; and you no longer need to fear.**

Collect

Keep us alert, we pray, O Lord our God, as we await the advent of Christ your Son, so that when he comes and knocks, he may find us watchful in prayer and exultant in his praise. Who lives and reigns with you... Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Reading

(Isaiah 2:1-5)

A reading from the Book of Isaiah

The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, and many peoples shall come, and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of



the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.” For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord. The word of the Lord.. **Thanks be to God.**

Responsorial Psalm—
(Psalm (121) 122:1-2.3-4ab. 4cd- 5.6-7.8-9)

R. Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord.

I rejoiced when they said to me, “Let us go to the house of the Lord.” And now our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem. R.

Jerusalem is built as a city bonded as one together. It is there that the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord. R.

For Israel’s witness it is to praise the name of the Lord. There were set the thrones for judgement, the thrones of the house of David. R.

For the peace of Jerusalem pray, “May they



prosper, those who love you.” May peace abide in your walls, and security be in your towers. *R.*

For the sake of my family and friends, let me say, “Peace upon you.” For the sake of the house of the Lord, our God, I will seek good things for you. *R.*

Acclamation

(Psalm 80:3b-4)

Alleluia. Alleluia. Come to save us, Lord our God; let your face shine on us, and we shall be saved. **Alleluia.**

Gospel

(Matthew 8:5-11)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

At that time: As Jesus entered Capernaum, a

centurion came forward to him, begging him and saying, “Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, in terrible distress.” And he said to him, “I will come and heal him.” But the centurion answered him, “Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes, and to my slave ‘Do this,’ and he does it.” When Jesus heard him, he marvelled, and said to those who followed him, “Truly, I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east



Monday December 4

and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.” The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Prayer over the Offerings

Accept, we pray, O Lord, these offerings we make, gathered from among your gifts to us, and may what you grant us to celebrate devoutly here below, gain

for us the prize of eternal redemption. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Communion Antiphon

(Ps 106:4-5; Is 38:3) **Come, O Lord, visit us in peace, that we may rejoice before you with a blameless heart.**

Prayer after Communion

May these mysteries, O Lord, in which we have participated, profit us, we

pray, for even now, as we walk amid passing things, you teach us by them to love the things of heaven

and hold fast to what endures. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**The Lord is God
for all**

Commentary

Matthew 8: 5-1

Today's readings reveal to us one of the many traits God. He is universal. He is the God of all nations, ready to bless and to welcome everyone. Such message may sound like a dream in context of war, enmity and humiliation. Universality of our God was the centre of Jesus' message. He did not reject anybody who sought His refuge. The Kingdom of God, is offered to everybody. That's the Lord whom we are waiting for". Are you ready to welcome Jesus Christ in your heart and do according to his will?

Rev. Fr. Kahindo Emmanuel, Kenya



Tuesday December 5

1st Week of Advent

Entrance Antiphon

(Zec 14:5.7) **Behold, the Lord will come, and all his holy ones with him; and on that day there will be a great light.**

Collect

Look with favour, Lord God, on our petitions, and in our trials grant us your compassionate help, that, consoled by the presence of your Son, whose coming we now await, we may be tainted no longer by the corruption of former ways. Through our Lord... **Amen.**

Reading --- *(Isaiah 11:1-10)*

A reading from the Book of Isaiah

On that day: There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but

with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a lion child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall feed; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The sucking child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall

not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. In that day the root of Jesse shall stand as an ensign to the peoples; him shall the nations seek, and his dwellings shall be glorious. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

***Responsorial Psalm —
(Psalm (71) 72:1-2.7-8.12-1317)***

R. In his days shall justice flourish, and great peace forever.

O God, give your judgement to the king, to a king's son your justice, that he may judge your people

in justice, and your poor in right judgement. *R.*

In his days shall justice flourish, and great peace till the moon is no more. He shall rule from sea to sea, from the River to the bounds of the earth. *R.*

For he shall save the needy when they cry, the poor, and those who are helpless. He will have pity on the weak and the needy, and save the lives of the needy. *R.*

May his name endure forever, his name continue like the sun. Every tribe shall be blest in him, all nations shall call him blessed. *R.*

Acclamation

Alleluia. Alleluia. Behold, our Lord will come with power, and enlighten

the eyes of his servants.
Alleluia.

Gospel _____ **(Luke 10:21-24)**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

At that hour: Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, ‘I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been delivered to me by my Father; and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.’ Then turning

to the disciples he said privately, "Blessed are the eyes which see what you see! For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it." The Gospel of the Lord.
The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

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.
Amen.

Communion Antiphon

(Cf. 2 Tm 4:8) **The Just Judge will bestow a crown of righteousness on those who eagerly await his coming.**

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. **Amen.**

Childlike Faith

Commentary

Luke 10: 21-24

Jesus praises God for revealing spiritual truths to “little children” rather than the wise and learned. This passage reminds us that faith and understanding often come through childlike humility and receptivity. Those who approach God with open hearts and minds, free from arrogance or preconceived notions, are more likely to receive divine revelation. Jesus highlights the uniqueness of His disciples experience, reminding them of the honor and blessing they have received by being chosen as His followers.

Rev. Fr. Kahindo Emmanuel, Kenya



Wednesday December 6

1st Week of Advent

Entrance Antiphon

(Hb 2:3; 1 Cor 4:5) **The Lord will come and he will not delay. He will illumine what is hidden in darkness, and reveal himself to all the nations.**

Collect

Prepare our hearts, we pray, O Lord our God, by your divine power, so that at the coming of Christ your Son, we may be found worthy of the banquet of eternal life and merit to receive heavenly nourishment from his hands. Who lives and reigns with you. **Amen.**

Reading ---

(Isaiah 25:6-10a)

A reading from the Book of Isaiah

On that day: The Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of fat things, a feast of choice wines – of fat things full of marrow, of choice wines well refined. And he will destroy on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death for ever, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people

he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken. It will be said on that day, “Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.” For the hand of the Lord will rest on this mountain.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

***Responsorial Psalm —
(Psalm (22) 23:1-3a.3b-4.5.6)***

***R. In the Lord's own house
shall I dwell for length of
days unending.***

The Lord is my shepherd;
/ there is nothing I shall
want. Fresh and green

are the pastures / where
he gives me repose. Near
restful waters he leads me;
/ he revives my soul. *R.*

He guides me along the
right path, / for the sake of
his name. Though I should
walk in the valley of the
shadow of death, no evil
would I fear, for you are
with me. Your crook and
your staff will give me
comfort. *R.*

You have prepared a
table before me / in the
sight of my foes. My head
you have anointed with oil;
/ my cup is overflowing. *R.*

Surely goodness and
mercy shall follow me all
the days of my life. In the
Lord's own house shall I
dwell for length of days
unending. *R.*

Acclamation

Alleluia. Alleluia. Behold, the Lord is coming to save his people; blessed are those who are ready to meet him. **Alleluia.**

Gospel ————— *(Matthew 15:29-37)*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

At that time: Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee. And he went up on the mountain, and sat down there. And great crowds came to him, bringing with them the lame, the maimed, the blind, the mute, and many others, and they put them at his feet, and he healed them, so that the throng wondered,

when they saw the mute speaking, the maimed whole, the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel. Then Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I have compassion on the crowd, because they have been with me now three days, and have nothing to eat; and I am unwilling to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way." And the disciples said to him, "Where are we to get bread enough in the desert to feed so great a crowd?" And Jesus said to them, "How many loaves have you?" They said, "Seven, and a few small fish." And commanding the crowd to sit down on the ground, he took the seven loaves and the fish, and having given

thanks he broke them and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And they all ate and were satisfied; and they took up seven baskets full of the broken pieces left over.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Prayer over the Offerings

May the sacrifice of our worship, Lord, we pray, be offered to you unceasingly,

to complete what was begun in sacred mystery and powerfully accomplish for us your saving work. Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Communion Antiphon

(Is 40:10; 35:5) **Behold our Lord will come with power, and will enlighten the eyes of his servants.**



Prayer after Communion

We implore your mercy, Lord, that this divine sustenance may cleanse us

of our faults and prepare us for the coming feasts. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Jesus, the Lord
of abundance**

Commentary

Matthew 15: 29-37

Jesus sees a crowd of hungry people and is moved with compassion. He multiplies a small amount of bread and fish to feed the entire multitude. Likewise, when we have limited resources and challenges seem insurmountable, we can turn to Jesus with trust, knowing that He will provide for us. Today, in a world full of scarcity, in Jesus, there is always an abundance of grace, love, and provision. As His followers, we can extend that abundance to others through acts of compassion and kindness.

Rev. Fr. Kahindo Emmanuel, Kenya



Thursday December 7

1st Week of Advent

Memorial

Saint Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

Entrance Antiphon

(Sir 15:5) **In the midst of the Church he opened his mouth, and the Lord filled him with the spirit of wisdom and understanding and clothed him in a robe of glory.**

Collect

O God, who made the Bishop Saint Ambrose a teacher of the Catholic faith and a model of apostolic courage, raise up in your Church men after your own heart to govern her

with courage and wisdom. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

First Reading ————— ***(Isaiah 26:1-6)***

A reading from the Book of Isaiah

In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah: “We have a strong city; he sets up salvation as walls and bulwarks. Open the gates, that the righteous nation which keeps faith may enter in.

You keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you. Trust in the Lord for ever, for the Lord God is an everlasting rock. For he has brought low the inhabitants of the height, the lofty city. He lays it low, lays it low to the ground, casts it to the dust. The foot tramples it, the feet of the poor, the steps of the needy.”
The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm —
(Psalm ⁽¹¹⁷⁾ 118:1 and
8-9.19-21.25-27)

R. Blest is he who comes in
the name of the Lord.

or: Alleluia.

Give praise to the Lord,
for he is good; his mercy
endures forever.

It is better to take refuge
in the Lord than to trust
in man; it is better to take
refuge in the Lord than to
trust in princes. R.

Open to me the gates
of justice: I will enter and
thank the Lord. This is the
Lord's own gate, where the
just enter. I will thank you,
for you have answered,
and you are my saviour. R.

O Lord, grant salvation;
O Lord, grant success.

Blest is he who comes in the name of the Lord. We bless you from the house of the Lord; the Lord is God, and has given us light. *R.*

Acclamation

Alleluia. Alleluia. Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near. **Alleluia.**

Gospel ————— ***(Matthew 7:21.24-27)***

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples, “Not every one who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my

Father who is in heaven. “Every one then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And every one who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it.”

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Prayer over the Offerings

As we celebrate the divine mysteries, O Lord, we pray, may the Holy Spirit fill us with that light of faith by which he constantly enlightened Saint Ambrose for the spreading of your glory. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Communion Antiphon

(Ps 1:2.3) **The man who ponders the law of the Lord day and night will yield fruit in due season.**

Prayer after Communion

Lead those who have been strengthened by the power of this Sacrament, O Lord, so to profit from the

teaching of Saint Ambrose that, hastening fearlessly along your paths, we may be prepared for the

delights of the eternal banquet. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Faith and action

Commentary

Matthew 7:21,24-27

Today Jesus reminds us that it is not enough to simply profess belief in Him or to utter words of devotion. True discipleship is marked by action and commitment to live God's commands. Are we merely paying lip service to our Christian beliefs, or are we actively living the Gospel? Do our actions align with God's will and teachings, or are we building our lives on the shaky ground of worldly desires and distractions? Let us build our lives on the rock of faith, as St Ambrose who we celebrate today did.

Rev. Fr. Kahindo Emmanuel, Kenya



Friday December 8

1st Week of Advent

Solemnity

The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Entrance Antiphon

(Is 61:10) **I rejoice heartily in the Lord, in my God is the joy of my soul; For he has clothed me with a robe of salvation, and wrapped me in a mantle of justice, like a bride adorned with her jewels.**

Collect

O God, who by the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin prepared a worthy dwelling for your Son, grant, we pray, that, as you preserved her from every stain by virtue of the

Death of your Son, which you foresaw, so, through her intercession, we too, may be cleansed and admitted to your presence. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading ————— *(Genesis 3:9-15.20)*

A reading from the Book of Genesis

[After Adam had eaten of the tree,] the Lord God called to him and said, “Where are you?” And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I

was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself". He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is it that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent beguiled me, and I ate." The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all cattle, and above all wild animals; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your

seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Responsorial Psalm —
(Psalm 97) 8:1.2-3ab
.3cd-4)

R. O sing a new song to the Lord, for he has worked wonders.

O sing a new song to the Lord, for he has worked wonders. His right hand and his holy arm have brought salvation. R.

The Lord has made known his salvation, has shown his deliverance



to the nations. He has remembered his merciful love and his truth for the house of Israel. *R.*

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Shout to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song, and sing out your praise. *R.*

Second Reading —————
(Ephesians 1:3-6.11-12)

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the

foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. He destined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him, according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to the counsel of his will, we who first hoped in Christ have been destined and appointed to live for the praise of his glory.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Acclamation (*Luke 1:28*)

Alleluia. Alleluia. Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you; blessed

are you among women.
Alleluia.

Gospel —————
(Luke 1:26b-38)

**A reading from the holy
Gospel according to Luke**

At that time: The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have

found favour with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end". And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I know not man?" And the angel said to her, "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, your kinswoman Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month with

her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible.” And Mary said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

The Creed is said

Prayer over the Offerings

Graciously accept the saving sacrifice which we offer you, O Lord, on the Solemnity of the

Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Mary, and grant that, as we profess her, on account of your prevenient grace, to be untouched by any stain of sin, so, through her intercession, we may be delivered from all our faults. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Communion Antiphon

Glorious things are spoken of you, O Mary, because from you arose the sun of righteousness, Christ our God.

Prayer after Communion

May the Sacrament we have received, O Lord our God, heal in us the wounds of that fault from which in a

singular way you preserved Blessed Mary in her Immaculate Conception. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Nothing is impossible to
God!**

Commentary

Luke 1: 26-38

Today, we celebrate the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, chosen for a holy purpose. She was not just any woman but one who, by God's divine plan, would become the Mother of Jesus Christ. God prepared Mary for this role by preserving her from the original sin that affects all of humanity, making her a fitting vessel for the Incarnation. Mary's privilege shows us that God can intervene in extraordinary ways to fulfill His divine plan, even in our broken and fallen world.

Rev. Fr. Kahindo Emmanuel, Kenya



Saturday December 9

1st Week of Advent

Ferial

Entrance Antiphon

(Ps (79) 80:4.2) **Come and show us your face, O Lord, who are seated upon the cherubim, and we will be saved.**

Collect

O God, who sent your Only-Begotten Son into this world to free the human race from its ancient enslavement, bestow on those who devoutly await him the grace of your compassion from on high, that we may attain the prize of true

freedom. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Reading _____
(Isaiah 30:19-21.23-26)

A reading from the Book of Isaiah

Thus says the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel: Yes, O people in Zion who dwell at Jerusalem; you shall weep no more. He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry; when he hears it, he will answer you. And though the Lord give you

the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your Teacher will not hide himself any more, but your eyes shall see your Teacher. And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, “This is the way, walk in it,” when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left. And he will give rain for the seed with which you sow the ground, and grain, the produce of the ground, which will be rich and plenteous. In that day your flock will be given pasture, and the lamb will graze in open fields; and the oxen and the donkeys that till the ground will eat salted food, which has been winnowed with shovel and fork. And upon every lofty mountain and every high hill there will be brooks running with

water, in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall. Moreover the light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day when the Lord binds up the hurt of his people, and heals the wounds inflicted by his blow.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm —
(Psalm (146) 147:1-2.3-4.5-6)

R. **Blessed are all those
who wait for the Lord.
or: Alleluia.**

How good to sing psalms
to our God;

how pleasant to chant fitting praise! The Lord builds up Jerusalem and brings back Israel's exiles. R.

He heals the broken-hearted; he binds up all their wounds. He counts out the number of the stars; he calls each one by its name. R.

Our Lord is great and almighty; his wisdom can never be measured. The Lord lifts up the lowly; he casts down the wicked to the ground. R.

Acclamation

(Isaiah 33:22)

Alleluia. Alleluia. The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our ruler, the Lord is our king; he will save us. **Alleluia.**

Gospel ————— *(Matthew 9:35-10:1.5a.6-8)*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

At that time: Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every infirmity. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest." And he called to him his

twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every infirmity. These Twelve Jesus sent out, charging them, “Go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And preach as you go, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without pay, give without pay.”

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Prayer over the Offerings

May the sacrifice of our worship, Lord, we pray, be offered to you unceasingly, to complete what was begun in sacred mystery and powerfully accomplish for us your saving work. Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Communion Antiphon

(Rv 22:12) **Behold, I am coming soon and my recompense is with me, says the Lord, to bestow a reward according to the deeds of each.**

Prayer after Communion

We implore your mercy, Lord, that this divine sustenance may cleanse us

of our faults and prepare us for the coming feasts. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Commentary

Compassion and service!

Matthew 9: 35- 10: 1. 5a. 6-8

In the gospel today, Jesus' shows His deep compassion for the multitudes. He sees them as sheep without a shepherd. This is a powerful reminder of Jesus love and concern for all. He commissioned His disciples to heal the sick, cast out demons, and proclaim the gospel. He assured them of His authority and His Spirit. As followers of Christ, we are called to see the needs of those around us, to have compassion for the marginalized and the lost, and to respond with love and service.

Rev. Fr. Kahindo Emmanuel, Kenya



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