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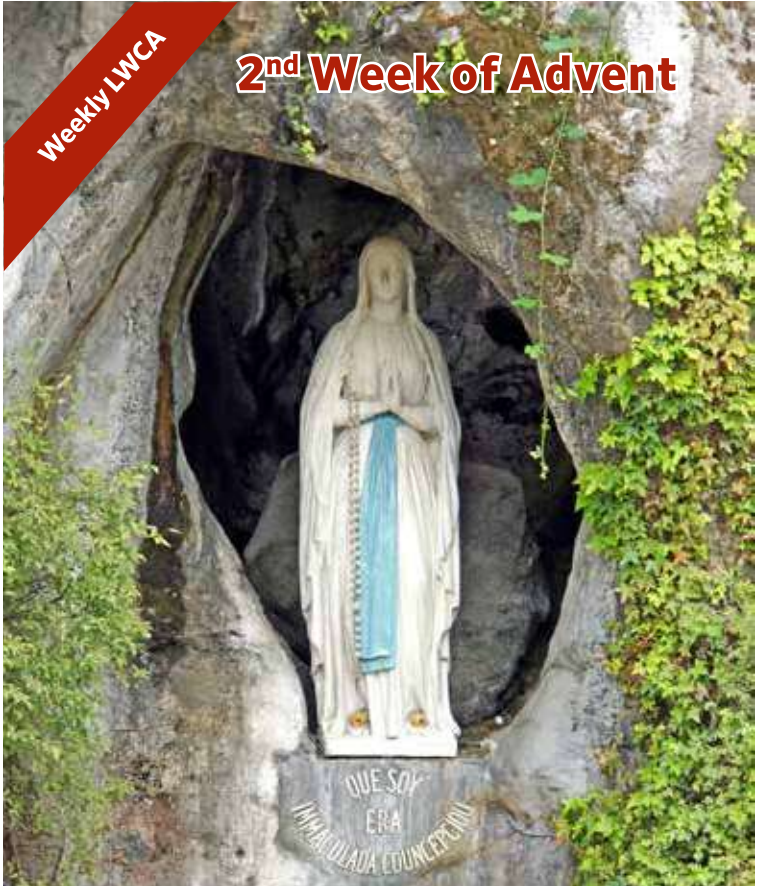
Living with Christ

GROWING UP DAILY WITH THE GOOD NEWS

Weekly LWCA

2nd Week of Advent

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AFRICA ● 4-10 December 2022 ● Digital n°10

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Liturgical texts:

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On our cover: Our Lady of Immaculate Conception

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Editorial

December 2022



Rev. Fr. François Nzanu, a.a. Nairobi-Kenya

Advent for Christmas

The Advent season is the liturgical season that precedes and prepares for Christmas. It is a season of joyful expectation and of peaceful preparation. It begins four Sundays before Christmas. The First Sunday of Advent, which marks the beginning of the new liturgical year for the Church is November 27th this year. The Third Sunday of Advent is traditionally called “Gaudete Sunday”, meaning “Rejoice, because the Lord is near.” Advent technically ends on the afternoon of December 24, and Christmas season begins.

The Christmas Season is the annual feast commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ which is marked on December 25th.

In the weeks before or during the Christmas season, many people set up a “manger scene” in their churches, homes, or public places, depicting the baby Jesus surrounded by Mary, Joseph, angels and shepherds, sheep and other animals, and possibly also the magi or “wise men.” Christmas is one of the highlights of the Christian year and a time of great celebration.

We wish you Merry Christmas.



The Pope's Prayer Intention

For volunteer not-for-profit organizations: We pray that volunteer non-profit organizations committed to human development find people dedicated to the common good and ceaselessly seek out new paths to international cooperation.

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

The Anointing of the Sick

When we read the Holy Scriptures, we notice that Jesus Christ had a special concern for the sick during his life on earth. He himself says that He came for the sick, not for the healthy. The main biblical foundation of the anointing of the sick is the letter of Saint James 4, 14-15 which reads: *« Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the Church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven »*. Sickness can weaken both the body and the spirit. That is why the anointing of the sick is meant to give spiritual and physical strength to the person who receives it.

Furthermore, Jesus instructed the Apostles to share in his mission: *«Jesus summoned the Twelve and began to send them out two by two, giving them authority over unclean spirits. With that they went off, preaching the need of repentance. They expelled many demons, anointed the sick with oil, and worked many cures»* (Mark 6:7,12). The

anointing of the sick is the continuation of what Jesus used to do when he was on earth.

Before Vatican II, this sacrament used to be referred to as the “Extreme Unction” as it was reserved to the dying. The Vatican II Council preferred the word Anointing of the sick to Extreme Unction. Nowadays, it is not only the dying people who receive this sacrament, but the elderly and the very sick people can receive it too. Therefore, the anointing of the sick can be received many times. Given that no sacrament is imposed, the anointing of the sick is administered to a reasonable baptized person who expresses the will of receiving it. This sacrament can be received any time and in any place.

The sick person is anointed on the forehead and on the hands. It is always important to take into account the context and to be aware of the bishop’s guidelines on the sacraments. In case the sick person has no hands, the minister will anoint another part of the human body. The minister of the anointing of the sick is the priest. A deacon cannot administer this sacrament.

The matter is the oil of the sick and the form is the following words that the minister pronounces when he administers the sacrament: «*Through this holy anointing, may the Lord in His love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up*». The oil with which the anointing is to be done is blessed by the bishop at the Chrism Mass with the proper blessing. But in case of necessity, the priest may bless with ordinary oil during the celebration of the sacrament.

In some African cultures, the oil is used for various purposes. It is beyond doubt that the king is anointed. As far as healing is concerned, the oil is still used to heal wounds, animal bites and certain skin diseases. Therefore, Christians from Africa understand better that the anointing of the sick is a sacrament of healing.

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



Sunday December 4

2nd Sunday of Advent

*Isaiah 11:1-10 / Psalm 71:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17 / Romans 15:4-9 /
Matthew. 3: 1-12*



“Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance.” Matthew 3:8



Repent and Be Renewed

Scripture has been put together as a means to reach out to us for an appreciation of what the good Lord has done for the early church. Specifically, it was meant to teach us the hope these early Christians reposed in God. Those who did not give up on God but placed their hope and trust in Him saw the beauty of grace and salvation in their lives.

The early Christians after their own conversion were led to live a life of renewal which was a sign of their new way of life as people who have been made new. That is what distinguished them from others who were not Christians and renewed.

In the season of advent, we focus on our renewal in the Lord through our repentance from our old ways and embracing newness in God. As people who have experienced the Lord in our individual conversion stories, we are called to prepare the way for the Lord so others may see the salvation of God.

In preparing the way for the Lord, we must ourselves be tools of repentance in order to cause that in others. How



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well have we been transformed in our own conversion story? Can we use our individual life experiences to cause others to embrace the message of advent? Our world needs our own stories of life in order to be reformed; people want to taste and see the goodness of the Lord in our own testimonies. They want to see and hear us tell our own stories of conversion and how good the Lord has been for us. We are not called out, to be theory-oriented converts but practically motivated ones whose life tells not only the Christ story but theirs as well.

Throughout his life, John preached Christ, his life was a story of what he preached and stood for. He calls out to us to show our conversion by the fruits of our life and nothing else. It is based on our products that we will be judged not only by God but that others will also see and be convinced. We can only make straight his paths and clear all that stand in the way by our own way of life, it is our ways that are crooked and not the Lord's, it is our waywardness that's making it impossible for others to appreciate the presence of God in their own lives. The mountains and hills are our own arrogance that blocks the view of others to see the beauty of God in life.

Rev. Fr. Winfred Tawiah, Accra-Ghana



Entrance Antiphon (*Isaiah 30:19.30*)

O people of Zion, behold, the Lord will come to save the nations, and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard in the joy of your heart.

The Gloria is not said

Collect

Almighty and merciful God, may no earthly undertaking hinder those who set out in haste to meet your Son, but may our learning of heavenly wisdom gain us admittance to his company. Through Jesus Christ your Son who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

First 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



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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 little 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, 12-13, 17)

I shall be sat - is - fied, Lord,
 when I a - wake and be - hold your like-ness.

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

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.



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He will have pity on the weak and the needy,
and save the lives of the needy. R.

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

Second Reading (Romans 15:4-9)

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

Brethren: Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome one another, therefore, as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, "Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles, and sing to your name."

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



Acclamation (*Luke 3:4,6*)

Alleluia. Alleluia. Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight; all flesh shall see the salvation of God.
Alleluia.

Gospel (*Matthew 3:1-12*)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand?” For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, “The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.” Now John wore a garment of camel’s hair, and a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit that befits repentance, and do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is laid to the root of the



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trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. “I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

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

Prayer of the Faithful

The following intentions are suggestions only.

℟. Lord, hear us!

For good and compassionate leaders in Africa and in other parts of the world, let us pray to the Lord our God. **℟.**

For good witnesses of the word of God in Africa and all over the world; for fruitful apostolates and pastoral works, let us pray to the Lord our God. **℟.**



For the end of terrorism and for those threatened and killed for their faith, let us cry out to the Lord our God. *R.*

For peace, mercy, security in the world, let us pray to the Lord our God. *R.*

Prayer over the Offerings

Be pleased with our humble prayers and offerings, O Lord, we pray, and since we have no merits to plead our cause, come to our rescue with the protection of your mercy. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Communion Antiphon (*Bar 5:5;4:36*)

Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights, and behold the joy which comes to you from God.

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.**

Monday December 5

2nd Week of Advent

Entrance Antiphon

(Jeremiah 31:10; Isaiah 35:4)

**Hear the word of the Lord,
O nations; declare it to the
distant lands: Behold, our
Saviour will come; you
need no longer fear.**

Collect

May our prayer of petition
rise before you, we pray,
O Lord, that, with purity
unblemished, we, your
servants may come, as we
desire, to celebrate the great
mystery of the Incarnation
of your Only-Begotten Son.
Who lives and reigns with
you and the Holy Spirit,
one God for ever and ever.
Amen.

Reading

(Isaiah 35:1-10)

**A reading from the Book
of Isaiah**

The wilderness and the dry
land shall be glad, the desert
shall rejoice and blossom;
like the lily, it shall blossom
abundantly, and rejoice with
joy and singing. The glory of
Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and
Sharon. They shall see the
glory of the Lord, the maj-
esty of our God. Strengthen
the weak hands, and make
firm the feeble knees. Say
to those who are of a fearful
heart, "Be strong, fear not!

Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you.” Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not pass over it, and fools shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall

not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

***Responsorial Psalm—
(Psalm 85:9ab and 10.11-12.13-14)***

Our God will come and save us!

I will hear what the Lord God speaks; he speaks of peace for his people and his faithful. His salvation is near for those who fear

him, and his glory will dwell in our land. R.

Merciful love and faithfulness have met; justice and peace have kissed. Faithfulness shall spring from the earth, and justice look down from heaven. R.

Also, the Lord will bestow his bounty, and our earth shall yield its increase. Justice will march before him, and guide his steps on the way. R.

Acclamation

Alleluia. Alleluia. Behold, the King is coming, the Lord of the earth, and he shall remove the yoke of our captivity. **Alleluia.**

Gospel ————— **(Luke 5:17-26)**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

On one of those days, as Jesus was teaching, there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem; and the power of the Lord was with him to heal. And behold, men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed, and they sought to bring him in and lay him before Jesus; but finding no way to bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into their midst before Jesus. And when he saw their faith

he said, “Man, your sins are forgiven you.” And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying, “Who is this that speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God only?” When Jesus perceived their questionings, he answered them, “Why do you question in your hearts? Which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Rise and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins”— he said to the man who was paralyzed— “I say to you, rise, take up your bed and go home.” And immediately he rose before them, and took up that on which he lay, and went home, glorifying God. And amazement seized them

all, and they glorified God and were filled with awe, saying, “We have seen strange things today.”
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 (105) 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.**

God Himself Is Coming to Save Us

Commentary

Isaiah 35:1-10, Psalm
84:9-14, Luke 5: 17-26

The Christian must live his/her life daily with the assurance that God is out to save him/her. The prophet Isaiah echoes this in the verse of our first reading, "Look, our God is coming to save us". The assurance given by Isaiah is one to help us be hopeful of what lies ahead of us and be prepared for it. He mentions a few of the things that should be done as we await the coming of our God. His coming will bring us liberation from all that has engulfed us and make it impossible for us to live our real lives. The period between now and when He comes is one that should be taken seriously by all.

Rev. Fr. Winfred Tawiah, Accra-Ghana



Tuesday December 6

2nd Week of Advent

Ferial

or **St Nicholas, bishop, Opt. Mem**

Entrance Antiphon

(Zechariah 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

O God, who have shown forth your salvation to all the ends of the earth, grant, we pray, that we may look forward in joy to the glorious Nativity of Christ. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy

Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Reading —————
(Isaiah 40:1-11)

A reading from the Book of Isaiah

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her

sins. A voice cries: “In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken?” A voice says, “Cry!” And I said, “What shall I cry?” All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people is grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand for

ever. Get you up to a high mountain, O Sion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, “Behold your God!” Behold, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd, he will gather the lambs in his arms, he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young. The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm —
*(Psalm (95) 96:1-2,3, 10,
 11-12, 12-13)*

R. The Lord our God comes with might.

O sing a new song to the Lord; sing to the Lord, all the earth. O sing to the Lord; bless his name. Proclaim his salvation day by day. R.

Tell among the nations his glory, and his wonders among all the peoples. Say to the nations, “The Lord is king.” he will judge the peoples in fairness. R.

Let the heavens rejoice and earth be glad; let the sea and all within it thunder praise. Let the land and all it bears rejoice. R.

Then will all the trees of the wood shout for joy at the presence of the Lord, for he comes, he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world with justice; he will govern the peoples with his truth. R.

Acclamation

Alleluia. Alleluia. The day of the Lord is near; behold, he shall come to save us.
Alleluia.

Gospel —————
(Matthew 18:12-14)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples, “What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of

them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go in search of the one that went astray? And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. So, it is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.”

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.**

Commentary

He comes with power

Isaiah 40:1-11, Ps 95:1-3, 10-13, Matthew 18:12-14

Yesterday, we reflected on our God coming to save us. Today, we reflect on His saving power. His saving power will be felt by all who so prepare themselves for an encounter with Him. Being made aware of the coming of the Lord is not a surety that all may or will encounter Him. His power to save will be felt by those who readily avail themselves for an encounter. The coming of the Lord is an assurance for us who are preparing to know that there is victory ahead of us and that victory will bring to an end the reign of the evil one and his comrades. Darkness will no longer prevail over light, because the Lord comes with power to rule over the world and His people. Hence, we should already be rejoicing because He comes with power to save us and make us heirs to His kingdom. Our song of victory should already begin to sound in all corners of the earth, our Lord comes with power to save us.

Rev. Fr. Winfred Tawiah, Accra-Ghana



Wednesday December 7

2nd Week of Advent

Memorial

Saint Ambrose, bishop and doctor of the Church

Entrance Antiphon

(Sirach 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.

Reading _____ *(Isaiah 40:25-31)*

A reading from the Book of Isaiah

To whom will you compare me, that I should be like him? says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these? He who brings out their host by number, calling them all by name;

by the greatness of his might, and because he is strong in power, not one is missing. Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, “My way is hidden from the Lord, and my right is disregarded by my God”? Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grows weary, his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

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

***Responsorial Psalm —
(Psalm (102) 103:1-2.3-4.8
and 10)***

R. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all within me, his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and never forget all his benefits. *R.*

It is the Lord who forgives all your sins, who heals every one of your ills, who redeems your life from the grave, who crowns you with mercy and compassion. *R.*

The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and rich in mercy. He does not treat us according to our

sins, nor repay us according to our faults. *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 11:28-30)**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

At that time: Jesus said, “Come to me, all who labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find

rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

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

(Is 40:10; 35:5) **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.**

Come to Me, all You Who Labour

Commentary

Matthew 11: 28-30

His call is an imminent one that demands a response, he calls us to himself and no other person. He mentions particularly our needs, for He knows them too well. He does not leave us to our fate, but gives us an assurance that "... I will give you rest". His call to us is not only to a friendship but that we may benefit from that friendship. The "rest" He promises to give is what He calls us to, He comes with power to save us. How ready and available are we for an encounter with Him bringing our burdens of Sin and all our weaknesses?

Rev. Fr. Winfred Tawiah, Accra-Ghana



Thursday December 8

2nd Week of Advent

Solemnity

The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Entrance Antiphon

(Isaiah 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.**

She is Full of Grace

Commentary

Luke 1:26b-38

The Angel's greetings to her ***"Hail, full of grace!"*** is what gives meaning to what we celebrate today. Anyone full of grace has no space to take in more, there will be a spillover, Our Lady is full of Grace, not only at the moment of Angel's visit but that she is full of grace since the beginning of her life. Gabriel uses a perfect passive participle in the Greek language, ***"kecharitomene"***; which means FULL OF GRACE all her life.

Mary is the New Testament "Ark of the Covenant", which she carried in her womb for nine months, Jesus Christ.

Rev. Fr. Winfred Tawiah, Accra-Ghana



Friday December 9

2nd Week of Advent

Entrance Antiphon

Behold, the Lord will come descending with splendour to visit his people with peace, and he will bestow on them eternal life.

Collect

Grant that your people, we pray, almighty God, may be ever watchful for the coming of your Only-Begotten Son, that, as the author of our salvation himself has taught us, we may hasten, alert and with lighted lamps, to meet him when he comes. Who lives and reigns with you.

Amen.

Reading

(Isaiah 48:17-19)

A reading from the Book of Isaiah

Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: "I am the Lord your God, who teaches you to profit, who leads you in the way you should go. O that you had listened to my commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea; your offspring would have been like the sand, and your descendants like its grains; their name

would never be cut off or destroyed from before me.”
The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

***Responsorial Psalm —
(Psalm 1:1-2,3,4 and 6)***

**R. He who follows you,
Lord, will have the light of
life.**

Blessed indeed is the man who follows not the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the path with sinners, nor abides in the company of scorners, but whose delight is the law of the Lord, and who ponders his law day and night. R.

He is like a tree that is planted beside the flowing waters, that yields its fruit in due season, and whose

leaves shall never fade; and all that he does shall prosper. R.

Not so are the wicked, not so! For they, like winnowed chaff, shall be driven away by the wind. For the Lord knows the way of the just, but the way of the wicked will perish. R.

Acclamation

Alleluia. Alleluia. The Lord is coming, run out to meet him; he is the prince of peace. **Alleluia.**

***Gospel —————
(Matthew 11:16-19)***

A reading from holy Gospel according to Matthew

At that time: Jesus said to the crowds, “To what shall I compare this generation?

It is like children sitting in the market places and calling to their playmates, “We piped to you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.’ For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon’; the Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Behold, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is justified by her deeds.”

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

Prayer over the Offerings

Be pleased with our humble prayers and offerings, O Lord, we pray, and since we have no merits to plead our cause, come to our rescue with the protection of your mercy. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Communion Antiphon

(Philippians 3:20-21) **We await a saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our mortal bodies, to conform with his glorified body.**

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.**

Let Us Follow the Lord**Commentary**

Isaiah 48:17-19 / Psalm 1:1-4, 6
/ Matthew 11:16-19

In the season of advent, we are to avail ourselves to encounter God and be ready to be formed anew. Our encounter with God is not for show, it is for change, change that leads to our salvation. The coming of the Messiah is basically to work out our salvation, so if we do not avail ourselves for such, then, there is no need to prepare at all.

The Lord seeks to teach us to know His ways and follow it. We must have a strong desire for the Lord, we must seek for a relationship with God, by following the Lord and being alert to His commandments.

Rev. Fr. Winfred Tawiah, Accra-Ghana



Saturday December 10

2nd Week of Advent

Entrance Antiphon

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

Collect

May the splendour of your glory dawn in our hearts, we pray, almighty God, that all shadows of the night may be scattered and we may be shown to be children of light by the advent of your Only-Begotten Son. Who lives and reigns with you. **Amen.**

Reading

(Sirach 48:1-4.9-11b)

A reading from the Book of Sirach

In those days: Then the prophet Elijah arose like a fire, and his word burned like a torch. He brought a famine upon them, and by his zeal, he made them few in number. By the word of the Lord he shut up the heavens, and also three times brought down fire. How glorious you were, O Elijah, in your wondrous deeds! And who has the right to boast which you have? You who were taken up by a whirlwind of fire,

in a chariot with horses of fire; you who are ready at the appointed time, it is written, to calm the wrath of God before it breaks out in fury, to turn the heart of the father to the son, and to restore the tribes of Jacob. Blessed are those who saw you, and those who have fallen asleep in your love. The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

***Responsorial Psalm —
 (Psalm (79) 80:2ac and
 3b.15-16a.18-19)***

**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.

Acclamation (Luke 3:4.6)

Alleluia. Alleluia. Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight; all flesh

shall see the salvation of God. **Alleluia.**

Gospel —————
(Matthew 17:10-13)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

As they were coming down the mountain, the disciples asked Jesus, “Then why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?” He replied, “Elijah does come, and he is to restore all things; but I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not know him, but did to him whatever they pleased. So also, the Son of man will suffer at their hands.” Then the disciples understood that he was

speaking to them of John the Baptist.

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

(Revelation 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.**

Elijah Will Come Again

Commentary

Sirach 48:1-4,9-11 /
Luke 17:10-13.

The prophet will come again and will bring transformation to our lives and our world. He will make it a better place for all of us who believe in God. The work of the prophet Elijah in the Old Testament will be made manifest in the life of the New Testament. The Messiah is the prophet par excellence, one greater than Elijah, but many would not recognize Him, hence, they will not pay heed to His teaching. Today, we are privileged to have foreknowledge of who He truly is, let us not lose our guard and miss our steps.

Rev. Fr. Winfred Tawiah, Accra-Ghana



Publisher: Pierre LANGLOIS

Publishing & Development Manager

Editor in Chief: Rev. Fr. François NZANZU a.a.

Assistant: Rev. Fr. Jean-Claude DIWEDIGA a.a.

Editorial Secretary: Virginia KABUGU

Graphic designer: Naomi SAWADOGO

Ghana Coordinator: Rev. Fr. Dennis OPOKU;

Associate Publishers: Fr. Walter Ihejirika, Regional Coordinator, LWC Nigeria,

Other **Contributors:** Rev. Fr. Emmanuel SALIFU;

Rev. Fr. Jérôme K. M. KOMBI; Rev. Fr. Sylvano OCHUODHO

Digital : HODIEB Dominique

ISSN: 2424-7464 ; **Contact:** Living With Christ

Rue E104, Lot 1076 Ilot 116 - Cocody Riviera 3 Abidjan , Côte d'Ivoire

Address: P.O. BOX 08 BP 2469 Abidjan 08 -

Phone number : (+225) 25 22 02 11 11 -

E-mail: info@livingwithchrist-africa.com





 WhatsApp : **+225 05 94 79 75 68 / +254727074304**

 Website : **[https:// www.livingwithchrist.africa](https://www.livingwithchrist.africa)**

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