

AFRICA

# Living with Christ

GROWING UP DAILY WITH THE GOOD NEWS

Weekly LWCA

**Holy  
Family**

bayard afrique



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#### **Liturgical texts:**

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**On our cover:** The Feast of the Holy Family

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# Editorial

**Dec 2023-Jan 2024**



**Rev. Fr. Paluku Meso Jean-Marie, Kenya**

## **Fostering Peace and Harmony in the New Year**

**E**very 1<sup>st</sup> January, we mark the World Day of Peace. It began with St. Paul VI in 1967 and has continued to-date. We are invited to reflect on the important work of peace building.

The theme for this year's World Day of Peace is "Artificial Intelligence and Peace." Pope Francis urges open discussions about the impact of new technologies and their potential for both positive and negative effects. He emphasizes the need to prioritize human dignity and foster a sense of global fraternity for technological advancements to contribute to justice and peace worldwide.

To mark the day, we can celebrate by fostering harmony and understanding among diverse groups, pray for those in need of peace, contribute to a world where justice, compassion, and reconciliation prevail, guided by Christ, the Prince of Peace.

Additionally, being new year, we are called to reflect on the passage of time and the opportunities for spiritual growth. We align our intentions to God's will. Prayerfully, we seek guidance and strength through Mary's intercession to live our faith, fostering a deeper connection with God throughout the year.



# 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 31

## The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

*Genesis 15: 1-6; 21:1-3. / Psalm 67:2-3.5.6 and 8 / Galatians 4: 4-7 / Luke 2: 16-21.*



"The child grew and became strong, full of wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him." (Luke 2:40)





## *Building a Holy Family*

**E**choing the sentiment of an ancient African saying, “A family tie is like a tree, it can bend but it cannot break.” We come from different families and our family backgrounds shaped us through the years. Jesus came from a family and we celebrate his family every first Sunday after Christmas. The Church in Africa emphasises the role of family as the first school of virtue, the first school of evangelization, the first school of faith, and an indispensable pastoral collaborator. In a special way, we celebrate the family of Joseph, Mary and Jesus, popularly known as the Holy Family because they serve as a role model for Christian families and provide a portrait of how a Christian family should look like. Joseph cared for Mary during the period of her pregnancy even when he knew he was not responsible for her pregnancy; together, Joseph and Mary took the infant Jesus to the temple for consecration (Luke 2:22-23); Joseph loved Mary and Mary respected Joseph and the child Jesus was obedient to his parents. All families desire to be peaceful, loving and happy but are not deeply connected to God who is the source of peace and happiness. Can we offer our society



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common family challenges that mitigate the flow of our happiness and peace? Can we strive to build a God-centred family where God takes precedence and where peace, love and happiness reign?

***Rev. Fr. Gerald Mamman Musa, Nigeria***



**Entrance Antiphon** (*Lk 2:16*)

The shepherds went in haste, and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant lying in a manger.

**The Gloria in excelsis** (*Glory to God in the highest*) **is not said**

**Collect**

O God, who were pleased to give us the shining example of the Holy Family, graciously grant that we may imitate them in practicing the virtues of family life and in the bonds of charity, and so, in the joy of your house, delight one day in eternal rewards. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

**First Reading** (*Genesis 15:1-6; 21:1-3*)

**A reading from the Book of Genesis**

After these things the word of the Lord came to Abraham in a vision, “Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.” But Abram said, “O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?” And Abram said, “Behold, you have given me no offspring;



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and a slave born in my house will be my heir.” And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, “This man shall not be your heir; your own son shall be your heir.” And he brought him outside and said, “Look towards heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your descendants be.” And he believed the Lord; and he reckoned it to him as righteousness. The Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did to Sarah as he had promised. And Sarah conceived, and bore Abraham a son in his old age at the time of which God had spoken to him. Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore him, Isaac. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**



**Responsorial Psalm** —————  
**(Psalm (104) 105:1-2.3-4.5-6.8-9)**



**R.** He, the Lord, is our God; he remembers his covenant forever.

Give thanks to the Lord; proclaim his name.  
 Make known his deeds among the peoples.  
 O sing to him, sing his praise;  
 tell all his praise;  
 tell all his wonderful works! **R.**

Glory in his holy name;  
 let the hearts that seek the Lord rejoice.  
 Turn to the Lord and his strength;  
 constantly seek his face. **R.**



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Remember the wonders he has done,  
his marvels and his words of judgment.  
O children of Abraham, his servant,  
O descendants of the Jacob he chose. R.

He remembers his covenant forever;  
the promise he ordained for a thousand generations,  
the covenant he made with Abraham,  
the oath he swore to Isaac. R.

***Second Reading (Hebrews 11:8.11-12.17-19)*** —

**A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews**

Brethren: By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place which he was to receive as an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was to go. By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised. Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore. By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was ready to offer up his only-begotten son, of whom it was said, "Through Isaac shall your descendants be named." He considered that God



was able to raise men even from the dead; hence he did receive him back and this was a symbol.

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

**Acclamation** (*Hebrews 1:1-2*)

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son. **Alleluia.**

**Gospel** (*Luke 2:22-40*)

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

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, the parents of Jesus brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”) and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.” Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. And inspired by the Spirit he came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus,



to do for him according to the custom of the law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, “Lord, now let your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.” And his father and his mother marvelled at what was said about him; and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is spoken against (and a sword will pierce through your own also), that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed.” And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher; she was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years from her virginity, and as a widow till she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshipping with fasting and prayer night and day. And coming up at that very hour she gave thanks to God, and spoke of him to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. And when they had performed everything according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

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





***Or Shorter (Luke 2:22.39-40)***

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

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, the parents of Jesus brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. And when they had performed everything according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

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

**Prayer of the Faithful**

*The following intentions are suggestions only.*

**℟. Lord, hear our prayer.**

For the Church, beacon of light to the family of nations, we pray to the Lord: ℟.

For governments throughout the world, in search of peace and understanding among the human family, we pray to the Lord: ℟.



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For peace of mind for all who suffer, we pray to the  
Lord: R.

For our parish, example of family to all, we pray to the  
Lord: R.

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

We offer you, Lord, the sacrifice of conciliation, humbly asking that, through the intercession of the Virgin Mother of God and Saint Joseph, you may establish our families firmly in your grace and your peace. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Communion Antiphon** (*Bar 3:38*)

**Our God has appeared on the earth, and lived among us.**

### **Prayer after Communion**

Bring those you refresh with this heavenly Sacrament, most merciful Father, to imitate constantly the example of the Holy Family, so that, after the trials of this world, we may share their company for ever. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



# Monday January 1

Christmas Time

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## ***Ferial***

**The Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God** (*Octave of Christmas*).

### **Entrance Antiphon**

**Hail, Holy Mother, who gave birth to the King, who rules heaven and earth forever.**

*Or: Cf Is 9:1.5; Lk 1:33*

**Today a light will shine upon us, for the Lord is born for us; and he will be called Wondrous God, Prince of peace, Father of future ages: and his reign will be without end.**

**The Gloria in excelsis**  
(*Glory to God in the highest*) **is said.**

### **Collect**

O God, who through the fruitful virginity of Blessed Mary bestowed on the human race the grace of eternal salvation, grant, we pray, that we may experience the intercession of her, through whom we were found worthy to receive the author of life, our Lord Jesus Christ, your



Son. Who lives and reigns with you. **Amen.**

***First Reading*** —————  
***(Numbers 6:22-27)***

**A reading from the Book of Numbers**

The Lord said to Moses, “Say to Aaron and his sons, thus you shall bless the sons of Israel: you shall say to them, The Lord bless you and keep you: The Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you: The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace. “So shall they put my name upon the sons of Israel, And I will bless them.” The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

***Responsorial Psalm*** —————  
***(Psalm 67:2-3.5.6 and 8 (R. 2a))***

**R. O God, be gracious and bless us.**

O God, be gracious and bless us and let your face shed its light upon us. So will your ways be known upon earth and all nations learn your salvation. **R.**

Let the nations be glad and shout for joy, with uprightness you rule the peoples;

you guide the nations on earth. **R.** Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you.

May God still give us his blessing

that all the ends of the earth may revere him. **R.**



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***Second Reading*** —————  
***(Galatians 4:4-7)***

**A reading from the Letter of  
Saint Paul to the Galatians**

Brethren: When the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So through God you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then an heir.

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

***Acclamation***  
***(Hebrews 1:1-2)***

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son. **Alleluia.**

***Gospel*** —————  
***(Luke 2:16-21)***

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

At that time: The shepherds went with haste to Bethlehem, and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it they made known the saying which had been told them concerning this child; and all who heard it wondered



at what the shepherds told them. But Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

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

**The Creed is said.**

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

O God, who in your kindness begin all good things and bring them to fulfilment, grant to us, who find joy in the Solemnity of the holy Mother of God, that, just as we glory in the beginnings of your grace, so one day we may rejoice in its completion. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Communion Antiphon**

*(Heb 13:8)* **Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.**

### **Prayer after Communion**

We have received this heavenly Sacrament with joy, O Lord; grant, we



**Monday** January 1

pray, that it may lead us to eternal life, for we rejoice to proclaim the blessed ever-Virgin Mary Mother

of your Son and Mother of the Church. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## New Year of Peace

### Commentary

Luke 2:16-21

First January has triple celebrations; new year celebrations, the Solemnity of Mary Mother of God, and the World Day of Peace. As we celebrate the World Day of Peace, we reflect on what Pope John XXIII calls the four pillars of peace: Truth, Justice, Charity, and Freedom. Some viable ways of participating in peacebuilding processes are to encourage forgiveness, reconciliation, mutual respect, cooperation, and harmonious relationships between people, emphasizing more of our similarities than differences.

***Rt. Rev. Gerald Mamman Musa, Katsina, Nigeria***



# Tuesday January 2

Christmas Time

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## Memorial

**Ss. Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, bishops and doctors**

### Entrance Antiphon

*(Sir 44:15.14)* Let the peoples recount the wisdom of the Saints, and let the Church proclaim their praise. Their names will live on and on.

### Collect

O God, who were pleased to give light to your Church by the example and teaching of the Bishops Saints Basil and Gregory, grant, we pray, that in humility we may learn your truth and practice it faithfully in

charity. Through our Lord Amen.

**Reading** —————  
**(1 John 2:22-28)**

**A reading from the first Letter of Saint John**

Beloved: Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son. Any one who denies the Son does not have the Father. He who confesses



the Son has the Father also. Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you will abide in the Son and in the Father. And this is what he has promised us, eternal life. I write this to you about those who would deceive you; but the anointing which you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that any one should teach you; as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie, just as it has taught you, abide in him. And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming.

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

***Responsorial Psalm —  
(Psalm 98:1.2-3ab.3cd-4)***

**R. All the ends of the earth  
have seen the salvation of  
our God.**

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

## Acclamation

*(Hebrews 1:1-2)*

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son. **Alleluia.**

## Gospel

*(John 1:19-28)*

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

This is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed, he did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ." And they asked him, "What then? Are you

Elijah? He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" And he answered, "No." They said to him then, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said." Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Then why are you baptising if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptise with water; but among you stands one whom you do not know, even he who comes after me, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie." This took

place in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptising.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

Accept this sacrifice from your people, we pray, O Lord, and make what is offered for your glory, in honour of Saints Basil and

Gregory, a means to our eternal salvation. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Communion Antiphon**

*(1Cor 1:23-24)* **We preach Christ crucified; Christ, the power and wisdom of God.**

### **Prayer after Communion**

May partaking at the heavenly table, almighty

God, confirm and increase strength from on high in all who celebrate the feast day of Saints Basil and Gregory, that we may preserve in integrity the gift of faith

and walk in the path of salvation you trace for us. Through Christ our Lord. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Who are You?

## Commentary

1 John 2:22-28 /  
John 1:19-28

“When the Jews asked John the baptist who he was, he confessed, “I am not the Christ.” He clearly stated, “I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord.’ We too should discover who we are and what God wants us to accomplish in the world. Self-discovery is a lifetime journey. For us Christians, there is no greater identity than the fact that we are made in the image and likeness of God. Simply, put it is enough to say, “I am a Child of God.”

***Rt. Rev. Gerald Mamman Musa, Katsina, Nigeria***



# Wednesday January 3

Christmas Weekday

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## *Ferial*

*Or: The most Holy Name of Jesus*

### **Entrance Antiphon**

*(Phil 2:10-11)* **At the name of Jesus, every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

### **Collect**

O God, who founded the salvation of the human race on the Incarnation of your Word, give your peoples the mercy they implore, so that all may know there is no other

name to be invoked but the Name of your Only Begotten Son. Who lives and reigns with you. **Amen.**

### *Reading* —————

*(1 John 2:29-3:6)*

**A reading from the first Letter of Saint John**

Beloved: If you know that God is righteous, you may be sure that every one who does right is born of him. See what love the Father has given us, that we should be



called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every one who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure. Every one who commits sin is guilty of lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. You know that he appeared to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. Any one who abides in him does not sin; any one who sins has not seen him, nor has he known him. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

***Responsorial Psalm —  
(Psalm 98:1.3cd-4.5-6)***

**R. All the ends of the earth  
have seen the salvation of  
our God.**

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

Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp, with the harp and the sound of song. With trumpets and the sound of the horn, raise a shout before the King, the Lord. R.

## **Acclamation**

*(John 1:14a. 12ac)*

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. To all who received him he gave power to become children of God. **Alleluia.**

## **Gospel** \_\_\_\_\_

*(John 1:29-34)*

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

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks before me, for he was before me.' I myself did not know him; but for this I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel." And

John bore witness, "I saw the Spirit descend as a dove from heaven and remain on him. I myself did not know him; but he who sent me to baptise with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptises with the Holy Spirit.'" And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."

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

## **Prayer over the Offerings**

Bringing you these offerings from what your bounty bestows on us, we pray, O Lord, that just as you have given to Christ, obedient even until death, the Name that saves, so you may grant us protection by its power. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Communion Antiphon**

(Ps 8:2) **O Lord, our Lord,  
how majestic is your name  
through all the earth!**

**Prayer after Communion**

May the sacrificial gifts  
offered to your majesty, O

Lord, to honour Christ's  
Name and which we have  
now received, fill us, we pray,  
with your abundant grace, so  
that we may come to rejoice  
that our names, too, are  
written in heaven. Through  
Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Behold the Lamb****Commentary****John 1:29-34**

John the Baptist introduced Jesus by saying, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world" (John 1:29). He described Jesus as "Lamb" because the lamb is the sacrificial animal, which points to Jesus laying down his life for the salvation of the world; At the time when John introduced Jesus, he had completed his mission on earth and was about to give way for Jesus to begin his mission. Do we realize when it is time to quit the stage entirely when our mission is accomplished?

***Rt. Rev. Gerald Mamman Musa, Katsina, Nigeria***





# Thursday January 4

Christmas weekday

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## *Ferial*

*Or: S. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Optional memorial*

### **Entrance Antiphon**

*(Cf. Jn 1:1)* **In the beginning and before all ages, the Word was God and he humbled himself to be born the Saviour of the World.**

### **Collect**

O God, who by the Nativity of your Only Begotten Son wondrously began for your people the work redemption; grant, we pray, to your servants such firmness of faith, that by his guidance they may attain the glorious prize you have

promised. Through Christ Our Lord. **Amen.**

### *Reading* —————

*(1 John 3:7-10)*

**A reading from the first Letter of Saint John**

Little children, let no one deceive you. He who does right is righteous, as he is righteous. He who commits sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.



Any one born of God does not commit sin; for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God. By this it may be seen who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not do right is not of God, nor he who does not love his brother. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

***Responsorial Psalm —  
(Psalm (97) 98:1.7-9ah-  
9cd (3cd)***

**R.** All the ends of the earth  
have seen the salvation of  
our God.

O sing a new song to the  
Lord for he has worked

wonders. His right hand  
and his holy arm have  
brought salvation. **R.**

Let the sea and all  
within it thunder; the  
world, and those who  
dwell in it. Let the rivers  
clap their hands, and the  
hills ring out their joy. At  
the presence of the Lord,  
for he comes, he comes to  
judge the earth. **R.**

He will judge the world  
with justice, and the  
peoples with fairness. **R.**

***Acclamation (Hebrews  
1:1-2)***

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** In  
many and various ways  
God spoke of old by the  
prophets; but in these last

days she has spoken to us by a Son. **Alleluia.**

***Gospel*** —————  
***(John 1:35-42)***

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

The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples; and he looked at Jesus as he walked, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. Jesus turned, and saw them following, and said to them, "What do you seek?" And they said to him, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?" He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where he was staying; and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. One

of the two who heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which means Christ). He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him, and said, "So you are Simon the son of John? You shall be called Cephas" (which means Peter). The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Prayer over the Offerings**

Receive our oblation, O Lord, by which is brought about a glorious exchange, that by offering what you have given, we may merit to receive your very self Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### Communion Antiphon

*(Jn 3:16)* **God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that all who believe in him may not perish, but may have eternal life.**

### Prayer after Communion

Grant, we pray, almighty God, that, by the power of these holy mysteries, our life may be constantly sustained. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## What Do You Seek?

### Commentary

1 John 3:7-10 / John 1:35-42

There are moments when we earnestly seek to encounter God. The two disciples of John the Baptist requested to encounter Jesus as soon as John the Baptist pointed to him as the Lamb of God. Apparently, their souls were, as the psalmist says, thirsty for God as in a dry weary land where there is no water (Psalm 63:1). As they followed him, Jesus turned to them and asked an important question, "What do you seek?" Likewise, how passionate are we in seeking Jesus and in desiring to have a deep encounter with him?

***Rt. Rev. Gerald Mamman Musa, Katsina, Nigeria***



# Friday January 5

1<sup>st</sup> Week of Advent

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## *Ferial*

St. John Neumann, bishop, *Optional memorial*

### **Entrance Antiphon**

(Ps 12:4) **A light has risen in the darkness for the upright of heart; the Lord is generous, merciful and just.**

### **Collect**

O Cast your kindly light upon your faithful, Lord, we pray, and with the splendour of your glory set their hearts ever aflame, that they may never cease to acknowledge their Saviour and may truly hold fast to him. Who lives and reigns with you. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Reading**

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**(1 John 3:11-21)**

**A reading from the first Letter of Saint John**

Beloved: This is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, and not be like Cain who was of the Evil One and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. Do not wonder, brethren, that the world hates you. We know that we have passed out of



death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love remains in death. Any one who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But if any one has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or speech but indeed and in truth. By this we shall know that we are of the truth, and reassure our hearts before him whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows

everything. Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God.

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

***Responsorial Psalm —  
(Psalm 100:1-2.3.4.5 (R.  
1)***

***R. Cry out with joy to the  
Lord, all the earth.***

Cry out with joy to the Lord, all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness. Come before him, singing for joy. *R.*

Know that he, the Lord, is God. He made us; we belong to him. We are his people, the sheep of his flock. *R.*

Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts

with songs of praise. Give thanks to him, and bless his name. *R.*

Indeed, how good is the Lord, I eternal his merciful love. He is faithful from age to age. *R.*

### **Acclamation**

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** A hallowed day has shone upon us: come, O nations, and adore the Lord; for today a great light has come down to earth. **Alleluia.**

### **Gospel** ————— **(John 1:43-51)**

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

At that time: Jesus decided to go to Galilee. And he found Philip and said to him,

“Follow me.” Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael, and said to him, “We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!” Nathanael said to him, “How do you know me?” Jesus answered him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” Nathanael answered him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” Jesus answered him,

“Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these.” And he said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

Receive with favour, O Lord, we pray, the offerings

of your people, that what they profess with devotion and faith may be theirs through these heavenly mysteries. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Communion Antiphon**

*(1 Jn 4:9)* **In this way the love of God was revealed to us God sent his only Son into the world that we might have life through him.**



### Prayer after Communion

O God, who touch us through our partaking of your Sacrament, work, we pray, the effects of its power

in our hearts, that we may be made fit to receive your gift through this very gift itself. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## The Trap of Prejudice

### Commentary

1 John 3:11-18 / John  
1:43-51

When Philip invited Nathaniel (Bartholomew) to come and see Jesus of Nazareth, Nathaniel remarked, "What good can come out of Nazareth?" There was a prevalent prejudice against Nazareth. The little town was considered to be socially, politically, intellectually, and historically insignificant to have produced the Messiah. We too fall into the trap of prejudice when we look down on people because of their backgrounds. Lord help us to appreciate all persons as bearers of your likeness.

***Rt. Rev. Gerald Mamman Musa, Katsina, Nigeria***



# Saturday January 6

## Christmas Weekday

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### Entrance Antiphon

*(Gal 4:4-5)* **God sent his Son, born of a woman, so that we might receive adoption as children.**

### Collect

Almighty ever-living God, who were pleased to shine forth with new light through the coming of your Only Begotten Son, grant, we pray, that just as he was pleased to share our bodily form through the child-bearing of the Virgin Mary, so we, too, may one day merit to become companions in his kingdom of grace. Who lives and reigns with

you. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### Reading ————— *(1 John 5:5-13)*

**A reading from the first Letter of Saint John**

Beloved: Who is it that overcomes the world but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? This is he who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the witness, because the Spirit is the truth. There are three witnesses, the Spirit,

the water, and the blood; and these three agree. If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater; for this is the testimony of God that he has borne witness to his Son. He who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. He who does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne to his Son. And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who has not the Son of God has not life. I write this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.

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

***Responsorial Psalm —  
(Psalm 147:12-13.14-  
15.19-20 (R. 12a))***

**R. O Jerusalem, glorify the Lord!**

**Or: Alleluia**

O Jerusalem, glorify the Lord! O Sion, praise your God! He has strengthened the bars of your gates; he has blessed your children within you. R.

He established peace on your borders; he gives you your fill of finest wheat. He sends out his word to the earth, and swiftly runs his command. R.

He reveals his word to Jacob; to Israel, his decrees and judgements. He has

not dealt thus with other nations; he has not taught them his judgements. *R.*

### **Acclamation**

*(Mark 9:6)*

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** The heavens opened and the Father's voice was heard: "This is my beloved Son, listen to him." **Alleluia.**

### **Gospel** --- *(Mark 1:7-11)*

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

At that time: John preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptised you with water; but he will baptise you with the Holy

Spirit." In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptised by John in the Jordan. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens opened and the Spirit descending upon him like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

*Or the following:*  
**Luke 3:23-38**

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

At that time: Jesus, when he began his ministry was about thirty years of age,

being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph. the son of Heli, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Janna-i, the son of Joseph, the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Nagga-i, the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda, the son of Jo-anan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of She-alti-el, the son of Neri, the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elm-adam, the son of Er, the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Sirneon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim,

the son of Mele-a, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David, the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Sala, the son of Nahshon, the son of Amminadab, the son of Admin, the son of Arni, the son of Hez ron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah, the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor, the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah, the son of Ca-iñan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech, the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalale-el, the son of Ca-inan, the son of Enos, the son of



Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

O God, who give us the gift of true prayer and of peace, graciously grant that through this offering, we may do fitting homage to your divine majesty, and by partaking of the sacred mystery, we may be faithfully united in mind

and heart. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Communion Antiphon**

*(Jn 1:16)* **From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.**

### **Prayer after Communion**

May your people, O Lord, whom you guide and sustain in many ways, experience, both now and in the future, the remedies which you bestow, that with the needed solace

of things that pass away, eternal. Through Christ our  
they may strive with ever Lord. **Amen.**  
deepened trust for things

## Family Tree of Jesus

### Commentary

**Luke 3:23-38**

An adage says, “A man who does not know where he comes from cannot appreciate where he is going.” The Gospel of Luke traces the ancestry of Jesus back to Adam, highlighting his descent from King David. Tracing his family tree from Adam is to show how connected he is to the entire human race. The family tree of Jesus is made up of diverse men and women, from different backgrounds. It shows us how God’s family includes all people and how God fulfils his promise as foretold through the prophets.

***Rev. Fr. Gerald Mamman Musa, Katsina, Nigeria***



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