

AFRICA

Living with Christ

GROWING UP DAILY WITH THE GOOD NEWS

Weekly LWCA

1st Week of Advent

byard africque

AFRICA ● 27-30 November - 1-3 December 2022 ● Digital n°09

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Liturgical texts:

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On our cover: Lighted candles symbol of Jesus Christ the Light of the world

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Editorial

November 2022



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

The Church in Heaven and on Earth United

Every year on November 1st, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of All Saints. In this solemn celebration, the whole church, both in heaven and on the earth, is united. All of us are called to share in the holiness of God and to live holy lives on earth.

In the same month, the Church celebrates two other major Solemnities: the Solemnity of All Souls and Solemnity of Christ the King which marks the end of the liturgical year whereby the cycle of the Church's liturgical celebrations culminates in the beginning of the new liturgical year. The Solemnity of Christ the King is celebrated on the final Sunday of Ordinary Time. It is also the final Sunday of the liturgical year, the last Sunday before the First Sunday of Advent. This year, the Solemnity of Christ the King will be celebrated on November 20th. Sunday, November 27th will be the first Sunday of Advent and the beginning of the Liturgical Year A.



The Pope's Prayer Intention

For children who suffer: We pray for children who are suffering, especially those who are homeless, orphans, and victims of war; may they be guaranteed access to education and the opportunity to experience family affection.

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

The Sacrament Of Penance

The sacrament of penance is also called sacrament of reconciliation. It was instituted by Jesus Christ. After his resurrection, he appeared to his disciples and gave them the power to remit sins as written in John 20, 23: «If you forgive anyone's sins, they will be forgiven. But if you don't forgive their sins, they will not be forgiven».

The sacrament of penance is one of the two sacraments of healing. Sin is a spiritual illness. Sin breaks two fundamental relationships: the relationship between God and the sinner; the relationship between the Church and the sinner. After confession, many people experience inner peace because they can definitely feel the relationship between them and God and they can participate fully in the Eucharist. Therefore, the sacrament of penance heals the penitent bringing them from darkness to Light.

The minister of the sacrament of reconciliation is the priest or the bishop. A deacon or any other minister

cannot hear confessions because they are not ordained to the priesthood. It is important to say that the penitent does not confess his sins to the priest, but to God represented by the priest. He is an instrument that God uses to convey his mercy to humankind. God is full of mercy and compassion for his children. He is ready to forgive them whenever they ask for forgiveness.

At the end of the sacrament of confession, the minister (*priest or bishop*) proposes a penance to the penitent. Penance is not punishment meant to humiliate the penitent. It is rather a prayer that the penitent recites to thank the Lord for his mercy and to ask for his grace. It can also be a work of mercy that the penitent is asked to perform during a certain period of time. The minister must be welcoming. His role is not to embarrass but to give hope by showing God's love to the penitent.

The sacrament of Penance is not to be confused with spiritual direction. A spiritual director helps a person or a couple or a family to grow in their human, Christian or religious life. But the sacrament of Penance has to do with the confession of sins. Nevertheless, spiritual direction can lead to confession and confession may lead

to spiritual direction. The sacrament requires human presence. One cannot confess their sins on phone or through social media.

According to the canon Law (can. 989), after having reached the age of discretion, each member of the faithful is obliged to confess faithfully their grave sins at least once a year. The matter of the sacrament of penance is contrition, confession, desire to amend life, and making of reparation by doing what the minister gives as penance. The form is made up of the following words pronounced by the minister: “...N, I absolve you of your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit”.

In a general way, the sacrament of penance takes place in the confessional, a kind of box where the priest hears the confessions of the penitent. It can be administered elsewhere provided the place is fitting.

Rev. Fr. Jérôme K. M. Kombi,
Rome-Italy



Sunday November 27

1st Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 2:1-5 / Psalm (121) 122:1-2.3-4ab. 4cd-5.6-7.8-9/Romans 13:11-14a /Matthew 24:37-44



“Therefore you also must be ready; for the Son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect.” Matthew 24:44



A Whole New World

The word advent comes from Latin *advenire*, which is to come and it is a preparatory season for the arrival or coming of Jesus. Four Sundays are set aside for this preparation for Christmas. During this season we give thanks for his first coming as a child as we look forward to his second coming in glory. As we prepare for the coming of Christ, Prophet Isaiah challenges us to transform our swords into ploughshares. Thus, he calls for a total overhauling of lifestyle; an end to strife and war; re-channeling of energy from fighting a “bad fight” into fighting a “good fight.” The words of the prophet speak to our hearts as he challenges us to think twice about all kinds of wars around us: internal wars going on in our hearts, cold wars, silent wars, wars of words, family wars, wars of attrition, civil wars, guerilla wars, trade wars, psychological wars, unending quarrels, and bitter conflicts. He does not only call us to sheath our swords but to turn our swords into ploughshares, to redirect our energies into fighting for a good cause such as waging a non-violent war against poverty, a non-violent war against all forms of injustice, a non-violent war against corruption. Destructive conflicts and wars are works of darkness and



Sunday November 27

this is where the letter to the Romans strongly calls us to “throw off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.” These works of darkness are mentioned as “Jealousies and rivalries.” As we enjoy the fun of the season, the Apostle Paul advises us to live a simple life and not get lost in orgies of drunkenness, promiscuity, and lust (cf. Romans 13:11-14). Jesus gave an example of the days of Noah when people were eating, drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage. The consequence is they missed to remember that the saving ark was waiting and was set to move. Those who entered the ark were saved from the destructive flood, but the flood carried those who were lost in the affairs of the world away. Are we ready to enter the saving ark of Jesus in this season of Advent by preparing adequately and spiritually for Christmas?

Rev. Fr. Gerard Musa, Sokoto-Nigeria



Entrance Antiphon (*Psalm (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 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



Sunday November 27

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)



Let us go re-joic-ing to the house of the Lord.



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.

It is there that the tribes go up,
the tribes of the Lord



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.

Second Reading (Romans 13:11-14a) —————

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

Brethren: You know what hour it is, how it is full time now for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed; the night is far gone, and the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light; let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in revelling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in



Sunday November 27

quarrelling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh.

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

Acclamation (*Psalm (84) 85:8*)

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

Gospel (*Matthew 24:37-44*)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples, “As were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and they did not know until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of man. Then two men will be in the field; one is taken and one is left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one is taken and one is left. Watch therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the householder had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have watched and would not have let his house be broken



into. Therefore you also must be ready; for the Son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

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 our Church in its mission to further the reign of God in the world, we pray to the Lord: ℣.

For wisdom, selflessness and humility in those committed to public service, we pray to the Lord: ℣.

For strength and comfort for all who are suffering physically, spiritually or emotionally, we pray to the Lord: ℣.

For our parish community, challenged to see the face of Christ in everyone, we pray to the Lord: ℣.



Sunday November 27

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 (*Psalm (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 November 28

1st Week of Advent

Entrance Antiphon

(Cf. 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

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 in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Reading

(Isaiah 4:2-6)

A reading from the Book of Isaiah

On that day the branch of the Lord shall be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land shall be the pride and glory of the survivors of Israel. And he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy, everyone who has been recorded for life in Jerusalem, when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and cleansed the bloodstains of Jerusalem

from its midst by a spirit of judgement and by a spirit of burning. Then the Lord will create over the whole site of Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day, and smoke and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory there will be a canopy and a pavilion. It will be for a shade by day from the heat, and for a refuge and a shelter from the storm and rain. 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 (79) 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 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 (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.**

I Am Not Worthy

Commentary

Matthew 8 :5-11

A Roman Centurion came to seek Jesus' intervention for his paralyzed and distressed servant. Jesus said, "I will come and heal him." 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." The centurion begged for help without allowing his exalted position to overwhelm him; He was indeed a humble man. Wise people say, the clothing of humility never goes out of style. No one is worthy to receive the grace, healing, mercy, and blessings of God. None is entitled to all these. The centurion knew that so well. Can we imitate such qualitative faith, exceptional humility, and loving care of the centurion?

Rev. Fr. Gerard Musa, Sokoto-Nigeria



Tuesday November 29

1st Week of Advent

Entrance Antiphon

(Cf. 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

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 Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

one God, for ever and ever.
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 fading 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)

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 anyone 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.
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 Timothy 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.**

God and Children

Commentary

Luke 10 :21-24

An African proverb says, "If you fill your head with pride, you will lack space for wisdom." Jesus praises humble people who are childlike. He exclaimed, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding (learned and clever) and revealed them to infants (mere children)" (Matthew 11:25). The learned and clever people are those who claim to know everything and who are no longer disposed to learn anything new; the learned and clever are also those who are spiritually arrogant and people who are not humble enough to accept the humble and deep message of the gospel. "God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6).

Rev. Fr. Gerard Musa, Sokoto-Nigeria



Wednesday November 30

1st Week of Advent

Feast

Saint Andrew, the apostle

Entrance Antiphon

(Matthew 4:18-19) **Beside the Sea of Galilee, the Lord saw two brothers, Peter and Andrew, and he said to them: Come after me and I will make you fishers of men.**

The Gloria in excelsis

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

Collect

We humbly implore your majesty, O Lord, that just as the blessed Apostle Andrew

was for your Church a preacher and pastor, so he may be for us a constant intercessor before you. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reading _____

(Romans 10:9-18)

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

Brethren: If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your

heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For man believes with his heart and so is justified, and he confesses with his lips and so is saved. The Scripture says, “No one who believes in him will be put to shame.” For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and bestows his riches upon all who call upon him. For, “everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.” But how are men to call upon him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? And how can men preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful

are the feet of those who preach the good news!” But they have not all heeded the gospel; for Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?” So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes from the preaching of Christ. But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed, they have; for “Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.”

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm—
(Psalm (18) 19:2-3, 4-5)
**R. Their sound goes forth
through all the earth.**

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the

firmament proclaims the work of his hands. Day unto day conveys the message, and night unto night imparts the knowledge. R.

No speech, no word, whose voice goes unheeded; their sound goes forth through all the earth, their message to the utmost bounds of the world. R.

Acclamation (*Matthew 4:19*) **Alleluia. Alleluia.**

Follow me, says the Lord, and I will make you fishers of men. **Alleluia.**

Gospel —————
(*Matthew 4:18-22*)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

At that time: As Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” Immediately they left their nets and followed him. And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him. The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Prayer over the Offerings

Grant us, almighty God, that through these offerings, which we bring on the feast day of Saint Andrew, we may please you by what we have brought and be given life by what you have accepted. Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Communion Antiphon

(John 1:41-42) **The Just Andrew told his brother Simon: We have found the Messiah, the Christ, and he brought him to Jesus.**

Prayer after Communion

May communion in your Sacrament strengthen us, O Lord, so that, by the example of the blessed

Apostle Andrew, we who carry in our body the Death of Christ, may merit to live with him in glory. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

They Followed Him

Commentary

Matthew 4:18-22

We like to follow those we admire, especially parents, teachers, preachers, and leaders whose teaching and lifestyle are in harmony. Sometimes, we call those we follow our idols, role models, or heroes. Jesus was selective in choosing the companions who will succeed him. He was not just looking for fans, admirers, social media followers, intellectuals, aristocrats, or noble men and women. He was looking for ordinary people with simple but profound qualities. Are we ready and willing to follow him?

Rev. Fr. Gerard Musa, Sokoto-Nigeria



Thursday December 1

1st Week of Advent

Ferial

or **Blessed Clementine Anuarite, Virgin and Martyr**

Entrance Antiphon

(Psalms (118) 119:151-152)

You, O Lord, are close, and all your ways are truth. From of old, I have known of your decrees, for you are eternal.

Collect

Stir up your power, O Lord, and come to our help with mighty strength, that what our sins impede the grace of your mercy may hasten. 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.

Reading _____ *(Isaiah 26:1-6)*

A reading from the Book of Isaiah

On 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. You keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed

on you, because he trusts in you. Trust in the Lord forever, 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, and 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)

℟. **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. ℟

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. ℟

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. ℟

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 everyone 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. “Everyone 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 everyone 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

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

(Titus 2:12-13) **Let us live justly and devoutly in this age, as we await the**

blessed hope and the coming of the glory of our great God.

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.**

Doing His Will

Commentary

Matthew 7:21.24-27

We live in a world where sycophancy (empty flattery), noise-making, and attention-seeking thrive. Presidents, leaders, and influential people usually enjoy the company of flatterers and are unable to differentiate between genuine and counterfeit associates. This is not so with God who sees the heart of everyone. It is a common error to think that praying loudly, singing beautifully, preaching eloquently, prophesying accurately, and healing mightily qualify us for automatic entry into heaven. All these spiritual exercises should inspire us towards total obedience to God.

Rev. Fr. Gerard Musa, Sokoto-Nigeria



Friday December 2

1st 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

Stir up your power, we pray, O Lord, and come, that with you to protect us, we may find rescue from the pressing dangers of our sins, and with you to set us free, we may be found worthy of salvation. Who live and reign with God the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

Reading --- *(Isaiah 29:17-24)*

A reading from the Book of Isaiah

Thus says the Lord God: Is it not yet a very little while until Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be regarded as a forest? On that day the deaf shall hear the words of a book, and out of their gloom and darkness, the eyes of the blind shall see. The meek shall obtain fresh joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall exult in the Holy One of Israel. For the ruthless shall come to

nothing and the scoffer cease, and all who watch to do evil shall be cut off, who by a word make a man out to be an offender, and lay a snare for him who reproves in the gate, and with an empty plea turn aside him who is in the right. Therefore, thus says the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob: “Jacob shall no more be ashamed, no more shall his face grow pale. For when he sees his children, the work of my hands, in his midst, they will sanctify my name; they will sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and will stand in awe of the God of Israel. And those who err in spirit will come to understanding, and those who murmur will accept instruction.”

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

Responsorial Psalm —
(Psalm (26) 27:1.4.13-14)

R. The Lord is my light and my salvation.

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; whom should I dread? R.

There is one thing I ask of the Lord, only this do I seek: to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord, to inquire at his temple. R.

I believe I shall see the Lord's goodness in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong; be stout-hearted, and wait for the Lord! R.

Acclamation

Alleluia. Alleluia. Behold, our Lord shall come with power, and enlighten the eyes of his servants. **Alleluia.**

Gospel ————— (Matthew 9:27-31)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

At that time: As Jesus passed on, two blind men followed him, crying aloud, “Have mercy on us, Son of David.” When he entered the house, the blind men came to him; and Jesus said to them, “Do you believe that I am able to do this?” They said to him, “Yes, Lord.” Then he touched their eyes, saying, “According to your faith let it be done to you.” And their

eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly charged them, “See that no one knows it.” But they went away and spread his fame through all that district.

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. *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.**

Their Eyes Opened

Commentary

Luke 16:1-8

Jesus opens the eyes of the blind. There are all kinds of blindness: physical, intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and moral blindness. Intellectual blindness is when we see things and the world only from one faulty and narrow perspective. The blindness of the heart and spiritual blindness are other forms of blindness that make us unable to see the needs of our neighbours. Moral blindness makes it impossible to see our faults, sinfulness, and imperfections. At Christmas, we celebrate Jesus, the light of the world. Should we not approach him, like the blind men, to also open the eyes of our hearts and minds and enlighten us?

Rev. Fr. Gerard Musa, Sokoto-Nigeria



Saturday December 3

1st Week of Advent

Memorial

Saint Francis Xavier, priest

Entrance Antiphon

(Psalm 18:50; 22:23) I will praise you, Lord, among the nations, I will tell of your name to my kin.

Collect

O God, who through the preaching of Saint Francis Xavier won many peoples to yourself, grant that the hearts of the faithful may burn with the same zeal for the faith, and that the Holy Church may everywhere rejoice in an abundance of offspring.

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 anymore, 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. On 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, and 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

Receive, O Lord, these offerings we bring you in commemoration of Saint Francis Xavier, and grant that, as he journeyed to distant lands out of longing for the salvation of souls,

so we, too bearing effective witness to the Gospel, may, with our brothers and sisters, eagerly hasten towards you. Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Communion Antiphon

(Matthew 10:27) **What I say to you in the darkness speak in the light, says the Lord, what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops.**

Prayer after Communion

May your mysteries, O Lord, kindle in us that fire of charity with which Saint Francis Xavier burned for the salvation of souls, so that, walking ever more worthily in our vocation,

we may obtain with him in your harvest. Through the reward you promise Christ our Lord. **Amen.** to those who labour well

Teaching, Preaching, and Healing

Commentary

Jesus taught and preached passionately telling his listeners who God is and what his kingdom looks like. “He 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” (Matthew 9:35). He preached persuasively about the values of the kingdom of God; he healed holistically, liberating people from physical, emotional, and spiritual bondage. We are also called to participate in the mission of Jesus. As we prepare for Christmas, we can ask ourselves the following question. Do we participate in the mission of Christ by enlightening others?

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