

## **Christmas Mass during the Day C2024**

The readings of this Christmas feast bring us at the heart of the great event of our salvation, that is, the birth of our Lord Jesus. They show us that the incarnation of our Lord is a turning point in the history of the humanity; it is the beginning of the redemption of the world and the fulfillment of God's promise to save us. They invite us to rejoice with the angels and all men and women of good will for what God has done for us by sending Jesus into the world.

The first reading of the book of Isaiah describes the joy of the return from the exile. It imagines how beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who come to announce to Zion the end of its slavery and the beginning of its liberation. It invites the people of Zion to raise the voice and to shout for joy for God is their king.

God, their master, he will restore Zion in its right and reconstruct the ruins of Jerusalem. At that time, all the nations of the earth will see how God redeems Jerusalem and brings salvation to his people.

What is behind this text is the idea that God is the redeemer of his people. Although the exile has brought his people down, his saving power and almighty hand will bring them out of suffering. It is that idea that is at the center of the feast of Christmas we celebrate today. There is also the idea that where God's power appears the nations are at peace.

This text helps us understand what is at stake in today's Gospel as it focuses on the birth of Jesus. First of all, the Gospel reveals that in the beginning was the Word. That Word was with God and was God. Everything that exists in the World was created by the Word. The Word came into the world as the light of the human race and shined in the darkness, but the darkness did not like it.

Then, the Gospel talks about John the Baptist who came in the world in order to bear witness to the light. It says that as the Word came in the world, not only the world ignored him, but even his own people did not receive him. But, to those who accepted him, he gave the power to become children of God.

John, in his witness, points clearly out that while the law was given to men by Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. It is Jesus, then, who reveals us the ever invisible God and from his fullness, we have all received, grace over grace.

The Gospel ends up by attesting that the Word that existed from the beginning of the world became flesh and dwelt in the world. Those who believed in him saw his glory: the glory of the Father's son, full of truth and grace.

What do we learn from this Gospel? Let us talk today about coming of eternity into time. What do I mean by that? Let me start by defining what time and eternity mean. We call time a dimension in which events can be ordered from the past through the present into the future and eternity, a time without beginning or end.

When the Gospel says that the Word was from the beginning, that it was with God and was God to the point that all things were created by him, it affirms the truth that in our Lord Jesus Christ, the ever-invisible and eternal God has appeared in time, in the world.

That truth is also attested by the Letter to the Hebrews when it says that in the past and in many ways, God has tried to speak with human beings, but without a real success. In the end, he sent his Son into the world. Through that Son, he made all things in the world. And in him, with him and through him, he created the universe and sustains.

The incarnation of our Lord is the highest point of the revelations of God to the world. Jesus is the perfect image of the invisible God. He is the reflection of the glory of the Father and the fingerprint by which he sustains the universe. Without Jesus, we are lost. Jesus has accomplished our purification from sins and sits at the right hand of the Father in order to intercede for us.

At the center of the celebration of Christmas, there is a mystery, that is, God has become a human being. In Jesus, the ever-invisible God has taken flesh and become a human being like us. In Jesus, God has taken a human face and espoused human nature. Jesus is not only the Son of Mary, but also the Son of God. He is God.

Jesus is the light that the Father has sent into the world to enlighten our darkness. Whoever accepts God's light will never be lost. Jesus is God's gift to the world in order to bring us peace and joy. Whoever welcomes him and walks in his paths will have the peace of heart that surpasses any good that someone can have in this life.

If we want God's life to shine in us, we need to change our lives and make them conform to the image of the one who has become one of us so that we become part of him. We must give up evil behaviors that push us to choose sin and death instead of life. That is why the celebration of Christmas challenges us so that we live according to God's words of life.

As Christians we witness to the truth that, in spite of crises in our world and in our own lives, we are not alone. God is with us in his Son, Jesus Christ. To know that God loves us and wants that we become his children makes a difference in our lives. This gives us the courage to confront the present and to hope for the future.

Christmas is not a celebration of a past event, but of an event that takes place today as we try hard to live in the spirit of Christ. Christmas happens anytime we create a new world around us. Anytime we give the best of ourselves in order to improve the human condition, we bring Christ into the world.

Christmas teaches that God is loving and caring. Christmas reminds us that we are the bearers of God to others. At Christmas, Jesus gives us the duty of bringing him to others so that they know him too.

God has given us a proof of his love by becoming one of us. Let us respond to him with love and listen to his cry of love. Let us not miss the opportunity to welcome him in our hearts and to receive his peace on this day. Amen!

**Isaiah 52: 7-10; Hebrews 1: 1-6; John 1: 1-18**



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