



"Justice shall flourish in his time, and fullness of peace for ever."

John the Baptist needed no introduction to the Jewish Christian communities that were Matthew's original audience. In fact, there is evidence that his influence extended far beyond the Jordan locality and the times of his life and preaching: his disciples turned up many years later in Ephesus as witnessed by Acts 19:1-5. The Gospels intentionally portray John in a way that resembles Elijah (see 2 Kgs 1:8) to show that he continues, in fact completes, the prophetic tradition.

John speaks of reform in terms of road building, a scene we can identify with today. Both the need for good roads in order to give access to all places remote as well as near, and the planning and labor that go into their building and repair, can tell us of the necessity of reform as preparation to allow the Lord to enter our lives. And the kind of work required gives us a strong image; clearing the debris of worldly attachments that hinder access, as well as widening the path of welcome to the Lord. Put yourself in the place of the people who approached John the Baptist. Why did you come? How hard is it to confess your sins? What does bathing in the Jordan River mean to you? Who are the Pharisees and Sadducees, and why would John speak so harshly to them? Do we deserve those words too? Repentance, or turning one's life around, comes from the individual person's intention, but only God can complete it by offering entry into a family relationship with him. The Holy Spirit and fire, along with harvest winnowing as an image of judgment, speak of God's power to accomplish what John's preaching and baptism can only allude to.

The work of the Holy Spirit goes beyond individual desires for personal salvation. Reconciliation even of deeply divided antagonists is the fruit of the Spirit in the fullness of God's kingdom. This reading compels the Christian to share in the spirit of reconciliation, and to rise above a self-centered concern and their own righteousness. God's kingdom is not brought about until all people are at peace with one another.

Christmas Giving Tree



Remember to bring in your gifts for the Women's Shelter and Vita Group Home no later than December 16 2007.

The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

Could God be calling you to be a priest, deacon, brother, or sister in order to help our world of today to truly "prepare the way of the Lord"? If God is calling you, call Fr. Liborio Amaral 416-968-0997 email vocations@vocations.ca

BUNDLE WEEKEND EVENT
Saturday December 15 and Sunday December 16

The St. Vincent de Paul Society provides low cost clothing and house wares. Items are given free of charge through a voucher system to those in need through our Toronto stores. Donations are collected through the parish Bundle Weekend.

The Society truck will be at our church on these days to accept donations of **gently used CLEAN** clothes that are still in good shape but are no longer worn will be greatly appreciated by a mother, father or child in need. Books and gently used house wares are also much appreciated. Please drop your donation off directly to the truck. Thanks for your support.

Thank you to everyone who contributed such wonderful baking for the Christmas bake sale. Thank you to all who purchased the goodies. We raised \$738.85 This is outstanding. Thank you to all the volunteers.

IMPORTANT DATES AND CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

SAT. DEC. 8 & SUN. DEC. 9 ALL MASSES
Confirmation Commitment Ceremony of Crosses & Light

MON. DECEMBER 10 7:30 PM
Social Committee Meeting

WED. DECEMBER 12 7:30 PM
First Reconciliation Parent Evening

SUNDAY. DECEMBER 16 12:00 PM
JP2 CLUB Christmas Party

MONDAY. DECEMBER 24 CHRISTMAS EVE 7:00 PM
English Children's Mass
10:00 PM
Italian
11:30 PM
Caroling
12:00 MIDNIGHT
Bi-lingual

TUESDAY DECEMBER 25 CHRISTMAS DAY 7:45 AM
Italian
9:00 AM
Italian
10:30 AM
English
12:00 PM
English

MONDAY DECEMBER 31 7:00 PM
English

TUESDAY JANUARY 1 MARY MOTHER OF GOD 7:45 AM
Italian
9:00 AM
Italian
10:30 AM
English
12:00 PM
English

INTENTIONS

11 December - 15 December TUESDAY DECEMBER 11 7:00 PM
+Loreto Lupo

THURSDAY DECEMBER 13 8:00 AM
Santa Lucia
Lucia Palandra



According to tradition, Mary, the Mother of Jesus, was the only child of Joachim and Anne of Nazareth. It is believed that Joachim and Anne married young, but were not able to have children for many years. After many years of prayer, Joachim and Anne each received a message from an angel telling them that Anne was pregnant.

In Anne's message she was told that God had heard her prayers and she would have a child who would be praised throughout the world. Her reply: "As my God lives, if I should conceive either a boy or a girl, the child shall be my gift to God, serving Him in holiness throughout the whole of its life." It is said that Anne kept that promise, placing Mary in the service of the Temple when she was only three years old.

Little is known of Mary's life from the age of three until her early teens. We can assume by looking at historical accounts of the people and culture of rural Galilee that these were busy years in Mary's life. In addition to her service in the Temple, Mary worked just like any other young girl, preparing foods, weaving materials, feeding the animals, taking care of younger children, and carrying the daily supply of water for cooking and washing from the town well Mary's faith also grew strong and deep in these years. Sometime between the ages of 13-16, Mary's parents made plans for her to be married to a carpenter named Joseph. The engagement took place and Mary returned home to wait for their marriage. During this time of betrothal, the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary and told her that she, as a virgin, would conceive and bear a son who would be the Messiah, the chosen one, God's own son. Scripture tells us that Mary was confused, but we can imagine that she was also frightened and nervous as well. Despite all of that, Mary spoke with deep faith when she said, "yes," to all God had planned for her.



II CONVERTITEVI, PERCHÉ IL REGNO DEI CIELI È VICINO

LA VITA pubblica di Gesù è introdotta da Giovanni, conosciuto come "il precursore". Nel Vangelo Matteo sottolinea la missione di Gesù, ossia quella di «battezzare in Spirito Santo e fuoco», espressione che unisce all'azione purificatrice del fuoco anche quella santificatrice dello Spirito Santo. Il riferimento alla "scure", come anche la presenza del "ventilabro" stanno ad indicare che si tratterà di un intervento divino definitivo. La "scure" sottolinea che la sentenza sarà senza appello e riguarnerà il risultato del nostro comportamento, ossia la presenza di "buoni frutti"; il "ventilabro" sta ad indicare il destino finale, espresso dalla separazione tra il grano e la pula, che comporta una sorte ben diversa: il granaio per il grano e il fuoco inestinguibile per la pula. Pertanto nessuno si deve sentire sicuro, come, invece, pensavano i farisei e i sadducei, che facevano affidamento sul nome di Abramo. Poiché tutta l'umanità, ebrei e pagani, si trova sulla stessa linea di partenza, quella del peccato, senza privilegi o vantaggi di sorta, ne consegue che fra noi devono cadere tutte le barriere, imitando Cristo che ci ha accolti tutti senza distinzione (Il Lettura).

Non dimenticare di portare i suoi regali per l' arbelo di natale, alla chiesa no dopo di il 16 dicembre.

Ringraziarla a tutti che ha contribuito informata così meravigliosa per il ila vendita Natale. Ringraziarla a tutte il che ha comprato le torte ed i biscotti. Abbiamo alzato \$738,85. Ringraziarla a tutti i volontari.



“Abramo concepì Isacco per la fede nella promessa di Dio “e divenne padre di molti popoli” (cf. Rm 4,18-22). Ugualmente Maria concepì Gesù per mezzo della fede. La concezione verginale di Gesù fu opera dello Spirito Santo, ma per mezzo della fede di Maria. È sempre Dio che opera, ma attraverso la collaborazione dell'uomo. Credere, infatti, è rispondere con fiducia alla parola di Dio, accogliere i suoi piani come se fossero propri e sottomettersi in obbedienza alla sua volontà per collaborarvi. La fede vuole sempre: 1) la fiducia in Dio e 2) la professione di ciò che si crede, poiché “con il cuore si crede per ottenere la giustizia e con la bocca si fa la professione di fede per avere la salvezza” (Rm 10,10). Una volta riconosciuta vera la parola di Dio, Maria credette alla concezione verginale di Gesù e credette pure alla volontà di Dio di salvare gli uomini peccatori, la volle e aderì a quel piano lasciandosi coinvolgere: “Eccomi, sono la serva del Signore, avvenga di me quello che hai detto” (Lc 1,38). Dalla sua fede quindi nacque Gesù e pure la Chiesa. Perciò, insieme ad Elisabetta che esclamò: “Beata colei che ha creduto all'adempimento delle parole del Signore” (Lc 1,45), ogni generazione oggi la proclama beata (cf. Lc 1,48). La Chiesa ha il compito di continuare nel mondo la missione materna di Maria, quella di comunicare il Salvatore al mondo. Il cristiano di oggi deve fare proprio il piano di Dio “il quale vuole che tutti gli uomini siano salvati” (1Tm 2,4), proclamando la propria salvezza e lasciandosi attivamente coinvolgere nel portare la salvezza al prossimo, poiché “in questo è glorificato il Padre mio: che portiate molto frutto e diventiate miei discepoli