

SUNDAY MASS

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 61:1-2,10-11.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Luke 1:46-54.

RESPONSE:

My soul shall exult in my God.

1. My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,
for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden.
For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed. **R**
2. For he who is mighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
And his mercy is on those who fear him
from generation to generation. **R**
3. He has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent empty away,
He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy. **R**

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, alleluia! The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he has sent me to preach good news to the poor. Alleluia.

GOSPEL: John 1:6-8,19-28.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON:

Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear. Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.

THE WEEK AHEAD

Live the Word

Mon 14 Dec St John of the Cross, PrD

Numbers 24:2-7,15-17; Psalm 25; Matthew 21:23-27
So much of our brokenness, and so much of the harm we do out of that brokenness, is rooted in the feeling that our past sins define us. Today's Scriptures reveal: *You are my beloved. Come, follow me.*

Tue 15 Dec Liturgy of the Day

Zephaniah 3:1-2,9-13; Psalm 34; Matthew 21:28-32
As we progress through Advent, has my longing for Jesus' coming, God's presence with us, deepened? Am I open to being surprised by God? *God of love, reveal yourself to me this Advent.*

Wed 16 Dec Liturgy of the Day

Isaiah 45:6-8,18,21-25; Psalm 85; Luke 7:19-23
"There are more tears shed over answered prayers than over unanswered prayers" – St Teresa of Avila.
O Lord, teach me what is for my good and lead me in the way I should go!

Thu 17 Dec Liturgy of the Day

Genesis 49:2,8-10; Psalm 72; Matthew 1:1-17
God's way of working through the unexpected is the heart of the gospel: a virgin gives birth; God becomes human; Jesus rises from the dead. When the unexpected happens to us, we need to keep trusting.

Fri 18 Dec Liturgy of the Day

Jeremiah 23:5-8; Psalm 72; Matthew 1:18-24
Unlike our shopping malls, Advent tries to keep Christmas at bay while we 'prepare the way' for Jesus' arrival. But today, even the Church can't wait, and we are given a preview of what is to come.

Sat 19 Dec Liturgy of the Day

Judges 13:2-7,24-25; Psalm 71; Luke 1:5-25
God chooses the poor and the lowly, like Mary, like you and I, to go to his people. God lives and moves in each one of us. All we need to do is respond. Like Mary, say 'yes' to God's invitation.

Sun 20 Dec 4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

2 Samuel 7:1-5,8-12,14,16; Psalm 89; Luke 1:26-38
Our freedom is important to God. God is amazingly humble. God will never force anything on us. Do we treat others in the same way – respecting their freedom, with humility and nurturing?

(KEY: SOLEMNITY; FEAST; Memorial; (Optional Memorial)
Pr=Priest; D=Doctor

Catholic Link

ADVENT WITHIN-BETWEEN-BEYOND

3rd Sunday of Advent • Year B
Divine Office: Week III • 13 December 2020

3. Advent Beyond

The advent of God is not only 'within' our hearts or 'between' our closest relationships. The advent of God is 'beyond' our real as well as our imagined boundaries.

For God so loved the whole world that he gave his only son...

Have we ever needed the Advent of our God as much as we do now? Consider what we have experienced this year:

- A pandemic that has turned everything upside down, from economies to travel, from work to leisure. To say nothing of its effects on family life. The book has yet to be written on its impact on children in particular, not just regarding their education but also many other aspects of their social and human development.

- A global conscientization about racism, forcing us not only to look at deeply held personal prejudices and assumptions, but also at structural supports for racism that have built up over centuries.

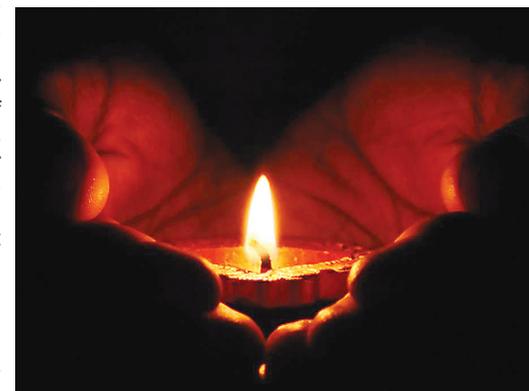
- Growing consciousness about gender-based violence reminding us that women who are 50% of the world's population are on the receiving end of male aggression in proportions that far outweigh that of female aggression towards men.

- Political tensions in countries and in regions leading to a sense of global insecurity that we have not experienced since World War II or the Cold War of the 1960s and 70s.

- Amazon forests on fire to which Pope Francis draws our attention in his exhortation *Querida Amazonia* (www.vatican.va) reinforcing his prophetic warnings in the encyclical *Laudato Si'* (www.vatican.va) that we are headed in a humanly abetted course of global warming that

threatens to devastate us in such a way that the Covid-19 pandemic will look like a picnic in comparison.

The list goes on. We begin to despair. We ask ourselves, what can we hope for? Where do we start in our search for hope? Where else but our faith that God is Emmanuel – God with us. We are not alone. God has become incarnate in human history through the birth of his beloved son of the womb of Mary. This humble woman of Nazareth is blessed among all women. She is *Theo tokos* – she has borne



He is the Light of all, a light that shines in our darkness, a light that darkness could not overpower.

God within her. She has borne the fruit of her womb to Elizabeth, to her husband Joseph, to humble shepherds, to wisdom figures from pagan lands, to weddings at Cana, and she has borne him to his death as she accompanied him to Calvary.

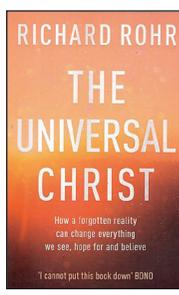
God is with us! Yes, even in everything we listed above. We are saved from within the heart of humanity by the "first-born" of all creation. In Jesus, God has identified with every human being, and every *kind* of human being, whether female or male, black or white, straight or gay, sinner or saint, adult or child. The Advent of our God knows no boundaries; the incarnation of the Word recognises no historical separations between people.

He is the Light of all, a light that shines in our darkness, a light that darkness could not overpower. To those who accept him he gave power to become children of God. The Word was made flesh; he lived among us. From his fullness we have received grace after grace. (Read John chapter 1)

Maranatha! Come, Lord Jesus!

Drawing on scripture, history and spiritual practice, Rohr articulates a transformative view of Jesus Christ as a portrait of God's constant, unfolding work in the world. 'God loves things by becoming them,' he writes, and Jesus' life was meant to declare that humanity has never been separate from God – except by its own negative choice. When we recover this fundamental truth, faith becomes less about proving Jesus was God, and more about learning to recognise the Creator's presence all around us and in everyone we meet.

Thought-provoking, practical and full of deep hope and vision, **The Universal Christ** is a landmark book from one of our most beloved spiritual writers, and an invitation to contemplate how God liberates and loves all that is.



R250 plus delivery



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