

24th December 2023

4th Sunday of Advent – Peace

The fourth Advent candle is lit – Purple

Jesus In Our Midst

Our Advent journey is now drawing to a close and the celebration of the birth of our Lord and Saviour is imminent. The focus today is on Mary, our role model in faith. Mary is depicted in Scripture as a person of similar virtues to Joseph, dignified and exemplary in her total trust and faith in God's plan for her and for the world.

We pray today for all expectant mothers, that our Blessed Mother will watch over and protect them and their unborn children. We ask that the beauty and joy of the life that mothers bring into the world may always be cherished as a miraculous gift of God.

O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee.

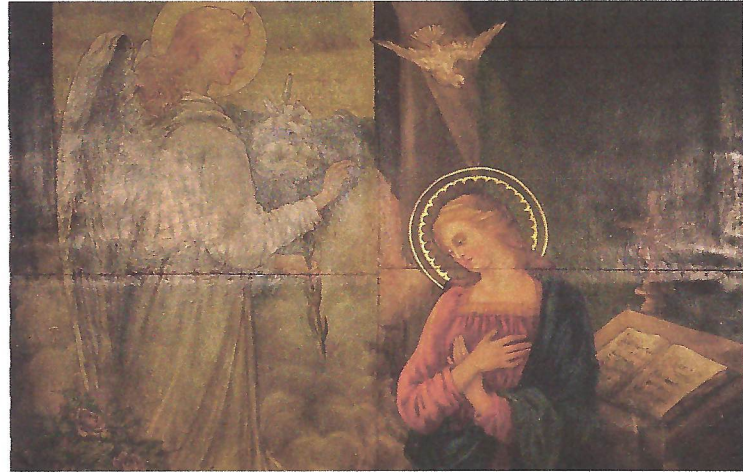
Today's Reading

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

A reading from the Gospel according to Luke

(Luke 1:26-38)

The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's



name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, "Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you." But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. "Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." But Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" And the angel said to her in reply, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God." Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Pause for Thought – Peace

The words “Do not be afraid” are words for us too. In the quiet of your heart talk to God about the things you are frightened of. Now remember these words: “The Lord is with you.” Take time to acknowledge God’s presence and entrust your worries, fears and concerns to Him, for God has promised to be with us always to the end of time. “Nothing will be impossible for God.”

Today we light the fourth candle on our Advent wreath. The theme this week is peace. Jesus, Prince of Peace, brings healing to a broken world.

The Magnificat

My soul glorifies the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.
He looks on his servant in her lowliness;
henceforth all ages will call me blessed.
The Almighty works marvels for me.
Holy his name!

His mercy is from age to age,
on those who fear him.
He puts forth his arm in strength and
scatters the proud-hearted.
He casts the mighty from their thrones
and raises the lowly. He fills the starving
with good things, sends the rich away
empty.

He protects Israel, his servant,
remembering his mercy, the mercy
promised to our fathers, to Abraham and
his sons for ever.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the
beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

*Light the fourth purple candle
– the candle of peace*



God of Peace, in a troubled world where there is suffering and strife, conflict and war, we pray for peace.

We also pray for inner peace, that our minds and bodies will be calm and at peace in the knowledge that You are about to come to us.

Without inner peace, we know there can be no global peace, so we look to you, Lord, for your love and direction to calm ourselves and be instruments of peace in the world.

Amen.



SCAN ME

Music suggestion

Scan this QR code with your mobile phone to listen to:

Holy is Your Name Magnificat