

Integral Faith

"Homily helps and liturgy resources highlighting care for our common home."



Homily Helps and Petitions for the Nativity of the Lord, Cycle A (December 25, 2022)

Homily Helps

† Scripture Passages to Note:

Isaiah 9: For a child is born to us, a son is given us; upon his shoulder dominion rests. They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace. His dominion is vast and forever peaceful.

Isaiah 62: The Lord proclaims to the ends of the earth: say to daughter Zion, your savior comes!

Isaiah 52: They see directly, before their eyes, the Lord restoring Zion.

Titus 2: [Jesus Christ] gave himself for us...to cleanse for himself a people as his own, eager to do what is good.

Titus 3: With the kindness and generous love of God our savior appeared...He saved us through the bath of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 1: God spoke in partial and various ways to our ancestors through the prophets; in these last days, he has spoken to us through the Son.

Luke 2: Joseph too went up from Galilee from the town of Nazareth to Judea, to the city of David that is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David..."For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord."

John 1: And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.

† Comments for the Day:

The messages of the readings for the three masses on Christmas might be gathered together under two major themes: God coming to us in human flesh, thus being a genuine part of creation; and the restoration of the people.

Each of the first readings is taken from Isaiah. The first proclaims the birth of a royal son who will rule the people in peace. The second identifies that king as the savior of his people. The third states that God will work through that king to restore a broken nation.

The readings from Titus sketch the wonders that Jesus accomplished. Embracing the flesh that he shares with us and with all the creatures that earth brings forth, he restored our relationship with God, making us a renewed people, part of a renewed world. The reading from Hebrews

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summarizes the message of these Christmas readings. God first guided the people through the teaching of the prophets. Then one greater than the prophets arrived – the very one of whom the prophets spoke.

The gospel passages from Luke recount the events that surrounded the birth of Jesus who was of the house of David and who was born in David's city. Furthermore, he is acknowledged to be the savior. It is quite clear that Jesus fulfills the expectations of ancient Israel expressed in Isaiah. He even surpasses them, as we read in John, which traces Jesus' divine lineage. Jesus is not only son of David and savior of his people; he is the true Son of God.

As we gaze at the manger scene, do we recognize him? Are we open to hear his teaching? Are we ready to allow him to transform us and the world of which we are a part? When it comes to caring for creation, are we prepared, as Mary and Joseph were, to do whatever is necessary to help fulfill the Lord's plan, and "eager to do what is good"?

† **Passages from *Laudato Si'* to Note:**

The prologue [of John's gospel] goes on to say that this same Word “became flesh” (*Jn* 1:14)... From the beginning of the world, but particularly through the incarnation, the mystery of Christ is at work in a hidden manner in the natural world as a whole. (99)

Grace...found unsurpassable expression when God himself became man and gave himself as food for his creatures. The Lord, in the culmination of the mystery of the Incarnation, chose to reach our intimate depths through a fragment of matter. He comes not from above, but from within, he comes that we might find him in this world of ours. (236)

The Son...through whom all things were created, united himself to this earth when he was formed in the womb of Mary. (238)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That our eyes might be opened to realize that in taking on human flesh, Jesus made himself part of the entire cosmos, let us pray to the Lord ...

Option 2: That the transformation for which we pray will embrace the entire created world, let us pray to the Lord ...

Further Resources

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