



“They are trees planted by streams of water; they bear fruit; their leaves do not wither; in all that they do they prosper.” Ps 1:3

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The Theme for 2018: “LISTEN AND OBEY” Jas:1:22 & Lk:8:21

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Joy to the world! The Lord is come!

“COME AND SEE”

Has anyone invited you with these words “**Come and see**”. Short and simple, the message here is clear and simple enough for anyone to understand. In fact, it creates an interest in the listener to go little deeper into the subject.

“**Come and See**” – **Jn 1:39**, these are the words first spoken by our Lord to

the disciples of John the Baptist who simply followed Jesus after he (John the Baptist), while seeing Jesus walk by, exclaimed, **“Look, here is the Lamb of God!”**

Jesus, the wisest teacher the world ever saw, knew that the first hand experience of seeing and believing is far more convincing. He gave them this invitation, “come and see.” They came, they saw and they were convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, immediately they became his followers.

The very next day Jesus asked Philip to follow him and Philip was more than convinced that Jesus was the one about whom Moses and the prophets wrote in the Law. He in turn, invited Nathanael with these words : **“Come and See” – Jn 1:46.** These words of Philip ignited the curiosity in Nathanael to meet the Lord. We know the continuation – Nathanael not only went and saw, but soon ended up making the bold profession, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”

Unless we apply it to our life, it will just remain a nice story. What is applicable to us in this? Surely, you and I have received this invitation to meet the Lord in different words and at different times. We can ponder over couple of points here.

1. What was our response to the invitation given by someone saying- “come and see”? Was it a whole-hearted acceptance or skeptical response or lukewarm acceptance or giving excuses?. Since we were born Christians it wasn’t difficult for us to accept that Jesus is the Messiah. But the next question – are we fully convinced that He is the one, about whom Moses and the prophets wrote in the Law? If the answer is not a bold “Yes” here is an opportunity.

May be, it is a good exercise to go through some of the prophecies of the Old Testament that speak about the coming of the King/Savior/Messiah/Redeemer. Shall we agree this Christmas to ponder over some of these so that this Christmas we are little more enlightened about the birth of our Lord.

Bishop Fulton J Sheen, while speaking on how to compare the world religions, mentions that, reason and history should speak about the person who is the centre of that faith. Some of those points are : “Did anyone know about the coming of that person into the world? Was his birth pre-announced? Was there anything told about his life? Was there anything known as to how he would die and thereafter? Yes, there is only One Person, that is our Lord Jesus who passed that test. It was all pre-announced about his birth, life and death. This truth should make us convinced about what is unique about Christianity. It is nice time for us to reinforce our beliefs by going through the prophecies about his coming into this world.

If these words, “come and see”, stir in us a desire to know our faith better, surely we will find some time these days to know little more about the birth of the Lord.

2. The second part that follows from “come and see” would be : what have we done after meeting and seeing the Lord? How many have we invited to come to the Lord and see him by our life?

The question I need to ask myself this Christmas is: how many have seen the Lord in my life? Can my answer to the Lord be – “thousands, Lord” or “hundreds” or ” ten”or “five” or “just one” or shamefully “none” or “I never thought I am accountable for that.” My life should speak louder than my words. **The virtues like compassion to the needy, patience with everyone, understanding others, forgiving all and so on, attract others to the Lord. When others see this Godly nature in us, people see the Lord in us.**

Shall we focus our efforts on these 4 things (compassion to the needy, patience with everyone, understanding others, forgiving all) a little more this Christmas and continue the rest of our life? This will be a simple and effective way of extending the invitation – “Come, see and meet my Lord”.

Another person to echo the similar words is the Woman of Samaria who

said “ “come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?” They left the city and were on their way to him. – Jn 4:29-30. While reading this whole episode we come to know that this woman and the entire city were knowing what was written in the scriptures and they were expecting the Messiah.

The disciples whom we often refer as ‘uneducated people’ knew the scriptures, the Samaritan Woman and the people of her city knew the scriptures and were expecting the Messiah, how much more you and I need to know our scriptures that is so easily available to us in so many ways? If we are found wanting, it is a matter of great urgency that we search the scriptures and prepare ourselves for this Christmas.

The knowledge of the scriptures will not only enlighten us about the things that were pre-announced about our Savior but also help us to be ready for the coming our Lord who will come again, to judge the world.

- *The Elder*

ADVENT: A SEASON OF HOPEFUL ANTICIPATION

As we are in the season of advent, its time for us to know how to prepare for it. Advent looks forward to the threefold coming of Christ: His historical coming (the Incarnation), His Second Coming at the end of time, and His continual coming in every moment into our lives and hearts. Advent prepares us for all three comings. (CCC 524).

Advent comes from a Latin word meaning “coming” or “arrival,” and marks the four Sundays preceding Christmas as a time to prepare for celebrating Christ's birth. This is a season for us to intentionally remember our need for God to come again in our lives.

As people of faith, we know that waiting is central to our journey with God. Throughout history, the faithful have had to patiently wait for the One whose sense of time is not the same as ours. Amidst our waiting, whether patiently or impatiently, we hear the reassuring words of hope from the prophet Isaiah that God works for those who wait. (Isaiah 64:3)

Advent not only points backward to the first coming, but also forward to the second coming, thus providing us with a vision of the future and toward the future. Advent, then, is a time of expectation: it is the acknowledgment of the fact that, although God has acted decisively on our behalf in Jesus' birth, there is still much outstanding. It is a time for us to express a desire for what God alone can give.

He came in a manger, in flesh; he will come again, glorified. But He also comes to us now, to live in us, to guide and lead us, and to help us change from the people we are into the people we were designed and destined to become.

Advent is a time that is filled with anticipation and therefore filled with vision and opportunity. It is a time to imagine what is possible in the limitless world of personal interaction with a loving God.

Advent is a time for taking stock of our lives and actions in light of the kingdom of God, which entered human history with Christ but still awaits completion. Our expectation of the coming Lord demands that we anticipate in our actions the kingdom with which He has identified Himself and will bring to us.

It can be hard to wait for anything; we constantly look forward to the next thing. Advent shows us how to wait in joyful and hopeful anticipation. It teaches us that the question is not “will God become present in my life?” but the reality that “God is present in my life and is coming into it at every moment of every day.

This liturgical season is a blessed time of waiting for Christ, and calls to mind that God is faithful; we can trust him because he keeps his promises.

Source: Lifeteen

We consider Christmas as the encounter, the great encounter, the historical encounter, the decisive encounter, between God and mankind. He who has faith knows this truly; let him rejoice.
- Pope Paul VI

Advent and the Wonderful Season of Christmas

The holy season of Advent prepares us for the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus at Christmas and his second coming.

This wonderful season lasts for four Sundays till Christmas and the four advent candles placed in the Evergreen wreath has its own significance, each one representing one of the four Sundays. In the centre is a fifth candle (white), the Christ candle, which is lit on Christmas Day.

Christmas, the beautiful season of the year is approaching celebrating the birth of our Lord Jesus every year, who came into this world 2000 years ago. Christmas kindles in each of our hearts much of love, joy and peace. This festivity commences with Carol singing, home decorations, purchasing of clothes, packing of various gifts, preparation of delicious, authentic Christmassy sweets, filling the air around with sweet, spicy aromas. But is this what Christmas is all about ? Definitely not. Without Jesus in our lives, Christmas is meaningless for us Catholics. Let us have more of the Lord in our Christmas this year and the years to come.

This festival should be celebrated placing Jesus as the centre of our lives accepting him as Our Lord, Our King and our Saviour now and forever. “Come Let us Adore Him, Christ the Lord”. Lets make room for Him in our hearts making this Christmas a beautiful memorable one, with Jesus as the main focus of our lives.

Here’s wishing each one of you and your families ‘Merry Christmas’ and a Blessed, Bright & Prosperous New Year 2019.

-Sheryl Carvalho

QUIZ CORNER - Christmas Quiz

Tick (✓) the right answer

1. Which season precedes Christmas?
a) Lent b) Easter c) Advent d) ordinary
2. How many days do we have between Christmas and the Epiphany?
a. 8 b. 10 c. 12 d. 15

*The greatest gift you will ever receive will never be found under a Christmas tree.
It is far too valuable to be stored in any other place but in the depths of your heart*

3. From which town had Mary and Joseph come before arriving in Bethlehem?
 - a. Nazareth b. Egypt c. Jerusalem d. Judea
4. Which side of the altar of incense the angel of the Lord was standing when he appeared to Zechariah.
 - a. left b. right c. front d. back
5. Who was governor of Syria when a decree went out for enrollment.
 - a. Caesar Augustus b. Quirinius c. Herod d. Pilot
6. When does Christmas season end?
 - a. Christmas octave b. Epiphany c. Baptism of the Lord.
7. A year contains 365 days, so on what number day does Christmas Day fall?
 - a. 357 b. 359 c. 360 d. 358
8. Which hymn's second verse begins with "Christ by highest heaven adored"?
 - a. Hark the Herald Angels Sing b. Silent night c. Joy to the World d. Mary's boy child
9. Which Christmas hymn's second verse begins with "Born a king on Bethlehem's plain?
 - a. The First Noel b. We Three Kings c. Away in a Manger
10. Which takeaway food is so popular in Japan at Christmas that it often has to be ordered weeks in advance?
 - a) Pizza b) Big Mac c) KFC d. Christstollen.
11. In the Christmas carol, once in Royal David's City, which city is the song referring to?
 - a. Bethlehem b. Jerusalem c. Nazareth d. Galilee.

ANSWERS FOR THE QUIZ ON JOHN Ch. 8 to 10.

1. c. Samaritan 2. c. The Pharisees 3. b. cannot accept 4. a. is pleasing to him 5. c. the ground. 6. c. judgement 7. b. loves 8. b. enters 9. b. me 10. b. know 11. c. forever 12. b. Dedication

Once in our world, a stable had something in it that was bigger than our whole world

Hearty congratulations to **Brenda Netto, Susan Pinto, Juliet Dsouza and Jessie Fernandes** for the correct answers.
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Wishing every member of The Mary Immaculate Praise Community (MIPC) & Your Families



The Core Team and the Publication Ministry



***MIPC Prayer Meeting: Every Thursday at 8:00 pm in the Parish Hall.
General Intercessory Meeting: First Monday of every month at 8:00 pm.***

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