

Liturgy Alive of 4th Sunday of Advent - C -

Greetings *(See Gospel)*

Blessed are they who believe with Mary
that the Lord will fulfill his promises.
The Lord be with you.

R/ And also with you.

Introduction by the Celebrant

A. God Visits His People

Our world is full of humble, ordinary people living in obscure hamlets, and yet some people like these have changed the course of the world. Within the history of the Church we are shown today the first person coming from such an ordinary milieu who by a simple phrase of her YES turned around the course of the world and the Church to be. It is Mary. Her YES to God, her "Here I am," gave to her and to us Jesus, the Son of God. It made possible the "Here I am," of Jesus. Her YES and the YES of Jesus call us and the whole Church today to give our unconditional YES to God. Let us ask in this Eucharist that we may join Jesus and Mary in their YES. Then we can change the course of the world today.

B. God's Way Of Coming

To solve our human problems we have recourse to strong means, like authority, influence, money, and power. God's upsetting standards are quite different from ours. To save our world and us he joins people in their weakness and becomes human among us. The Savior is born not in the capital but in a sleepy rural town. He is born in poverty. He overthrows the power of evil with the apparent weakness of humility, obedience, and service. A woman and a child are at the beginning of our salvation. Let us recognize God's astonishing way of coming.

Penitential Act

A. God Visits His People

Too often we have said "no" to God
and to the people who appealed to us.
Let us ask God and one another to forgive us.

(pause)

Lord Jesus, Mary said her YES to God
and thus you could be born as one of us:
Lord, have mercy. *R/ Lord, have mercy.*
Jesus Christ, you said your "Here I am"
to the Father and to all of humanity,
and thus you could bring us life and love:
Christ, have mercy. *R/ Christ, have mercy.*
Lord Jesus, you invite each and all
to say YES to God and to people
together with you and your Mother:
Lord, have mercy. *R/ Lord, have mercy.*
Have mercy on us, Lord,
and forgive us all our sins.
Make us entrust ourselves to you
and carry out your plans,

so that you can lead us to everlasting life. *R/ Amen.*

B. God's Way Of Coming

Are we willing to welcome the Lord and let him work in us
not in the way we want but on his own terms?
Let us examine ourselves.

(pause)

Lord, you came to restore our strength
by coming among us in human weakness:
Lord, have mercy. *R/ Lord, have mercy.*
Jesus Christ, you made us rich in grace
by your poverty and humility:
Christ, have mercy. *R/ Christ, have mercy.*
Lord, you displayed your saving power
in service and suffering:
Lord, have mercy. *R/ Lord, have mercy.*
Have mercy on us, Lord,
save us and the world from the evil of sin,
convert us to your ways

and lead us to everlasting life. *R/ Amen.*

Opening Prayer

A. God Visits His People

Let us pray that with Mary
we may eagerly prepare for the Lord's coming
(pause)
Faithful God,
let us see the face of your Son
and we shall be saved.
Let Jesus come so much alive
among us your people
that with him we can seek your will in all we do.
Help us to serve you and our brothers and sisters
together with Mary, your humble servant,
and with her sing the joyful song
of those you set free
through Jesus Christ our Lord. *R/ Amen.*

B. God's Way Of Coming

Let us pray to God that we may welcome his Son
with deep faith.
(pause)
Our God and Father,
we are eagerly awaiting
the deeper coming of your Son among us.
Prepare us to recognize and receive him
when he comes in his own astonishing way.
We expected him to come with great power
and he comes in poverty and humility;
we looked for him in far places
and he stands by our side;
we waited for extraordinary signs
and we discover him in the simplicity
of everyday life and everyday people.
Accustom us to your Son and his ways
that he may change our lives to conform to his,

for he is our Lord and Savior for ever. *R/ Amen.*

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading Introduction: A Humble Ruler Brings Peace

A shepherd king born in humility will bring peace and salvation.

Second Reading Introduction: I Am Coming To Obey Your Will

When Jesus comes, he gives himself totally to the Father. Can we say with him: Here I am to do your will?

Gospel Introduction: Blessed Is She Who Believed

While she was bearing God's son, Mary paid her cousin Elizabeth a visit of loving service.

General Intercessions

With Mary we firmly believe that God is fulfilling his promises. With Mary we pray to the Father: *R/ Lord, give us your Son.*

- That the Church, God's People today, may welcome the Lord Jesus with warmth and joy in the poor and the little people, let us pray: *R/ Lord, give us your Son.*
- That people with their hearts set on peace may bring to our torn and divided world the harmony and the cooperation which Jesus, the Prince of Peace, wanted to give us, let us pray: *R/ Lord, give us your Son.*
- That justice may flourish in our day, that the needy may be filled with good things and that there may be love and mercy among people as they accept Jesus as their Savior, let us pray: *R/ Lord, give us your Son.*
- That people who have lost the way in life and those who live in the night of doubt and fear may come to know who their Savior is, let us pray: *R/ Lord, give us your Son.*
- That all our communities, great and small, which celebrate the joy of Christmas, may grow in unity and friendship and in commitment to unselfish service, let us pray: *R/ Lord, give us your Son.*

Father in heaven, give us your Son, for we need him to make us and our world new. In him we place all our hope, now and for ever. *R/ Amen.*

Prayer over the Gifts

God of mercy,
you are so near to us
that Jesus, your Son, born of the Virgin Mary,
becomes one of us as Emmanuel,
our God-with-us.
He looks so much like us
that we are afraid not to recognize him
when he passes among us.
May we truly discover him
in the poor and those in need

and even in ourselves, in our own weakness,
that he may take us by the hand
and lead us to you.

our God and Father for ever. *R/ Amen.*

Introduction to the Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord Jesus is near this Christmas to take a greater place in our lives. He is near to us here in this Eucharist. With him we thank the Father for his lasting kindness.

Invitation to the Lord's Prayer

In the words of Jesus, our brother,
let us pray to our Father

that with Jesus we may do his will: *R/ Our Father...*

Deliver Us

Deliver us Lord, from every evil
and let your Son be our peace.
Help us to understand
that love is not only to give
but also to take and receive.
Open our hearts to welcome your Son
and to receive from him light and life,
as we prepare in joyful hope
for the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ.

R/ For the kingdom...

Invitation to Communion

This is Jesus, our Lord,
who said on coming into the world:
"God, here I am;
I am coming to do your will."
Happy are we to be invited
to receive the bread of life
that will help us to seek God's will.

R/ Lord, I am not worthy...

Prayer after Communion

Lord God, loving Father,
in this Eucharistic celebration
you have given us Jesus your Son.
Help us to welcome him always
with the attitude of Mary, his mother,
ready for him when he is least expected,
recognizing him in events and in people,
and sharing him with those we meet
in the joy of serving love.

We ask you this through Christ our Lord. *R/ Amen.*

Blessing

We are now close to Christmas

and we are already full of joy.

Let it not be a superficial cheer

but a joy that comes from saying YES to God,

to his plans, to his love,

and of giving ourselves in love

to those around us.

May God give you this joy and bless you all:

the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. *R/ Amen.*

Let us go and recognize the Lord

and welcome him when we meet him. *R/ Thanks be to God.*