



The Fourth Sunday of Advent

By What Right?

500th Anniversary Prayer for Advent

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Leader A Come and hear what the word is that comes from the Lord.
(Ez. 33:36)
Song: "A Voice Cries out in the Wilderness"
Jan Michael Joncas Trust, OCP Publications.

Leader B O PREPARING God
Send us this day a messenger.
A Voice calling once again

Leader A We have held fingers over good news
Willing the gospel to be a comfort-contract not a covenant
with justice

Leader B We have avoided the oppressed, blamed the captives
Forgotten the prisoners

Leader A Repair the ruined places in our lives as recall a
500-year-old message

Side A I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness
In order to make your sins known to you, I who am the voice of
Christ crying in the wilderness of this island.

Side B You must listen to me.
Not with indifference but with all of your heart and senses,
For this voice will be the strangest, the harshest and hardest,
the most terrifying that you ever expected to hear.

Side A This voice declares that you are in mortal sin, and live and die
Therein by reason of the cruelty and tyranny that you practice
On these innocent people.

Side B Tell me- by what right or justice do you hold these Indians in
such cruel and horrible slavery?

Side A By what right do you wage such detestable wars on these
people who lived mildly and peacefully in their own lands,
where you have consumed infinite numbers of them with
unheard of murders and desolations?

SIDE B Why do you so greatly oppress and fatigue them, not giving
them enough to eat or caring for them when they fall ill from
excessive Labors, so that they die or rather are slain so that
YOU may extract And acquire gold every day?

Side A And what care do you take that they receive religious instruction and come to know their God and creator, or that they be baptized, hear Mass, or observe holidays and Sundays?

Side B Are they not human? Do they not have rational souls?
Are you not bound to love them as you love yourselves?

SIDE A How can you lay in such profound and lethargic slumber? Be sure that in your present state you can no more be saved than the Moors who do not have and do not want the faith of Jesus Christ.

ALL Glory to God throughout all the ages
Three in one and one in three
Now and in eternity. Amen. Amen.

ANTIPHON RESPONSE

ALL Glory to God who alone is wise through Christ Jesus forever.
Amen

READER 1 Glory to him who is able to give you strength, according to the Good News, proclaimed announcing Christ Jesus.

ALL Glory to God who alone is wise through Christ Jesus forever.
Amen

READER 2 Now is revealed the mysterious plan kept hidden for all ages past I have cut down your enemies before you.

ALL: Glory to God who alone is wise through Christ Jesus forever.
Amen

Reader 1 I will make your name great as the name of the great ones before you. My people shall no longer be harassed nor shall wicked ones oppress them as before.

ALL Glory to God who alone is wise through Christ Jesus forever.
Amen

READING

The story starts at the close of the fifteenth century. Haiti was the site of Europe's first New World settlement after one of Columbus's three ships floundered off the northern coast of Haiti in 1492. The island's native Taino population, numbering at least in the hundreds of thousands (some demographers say millions) was mostly wiped within a century of the Columbia exchange by assault from pathogens ranging from slavery to small pox. When a 1697 treaty ceded the western third of Hispaniola (Colombia's name for the island called "Ayiti" by its doomed inhabitants) to France, not a single Taino remained alive. For those who say Haiti's history is written in blood, this is the first chapter.

The second chapter is equally brutal. Although the Spanish began importing slaves from Africa in the first decades of the sixteenth century, it was the French who moved the slave trade into high gear by the mid-eighteenth century. Haiti was the America's chief port of call for slaves. By 1540 some 30,000 in chains had reached Haiti's shores. Saint Dominique was the name given to the French colony of Hispaniola from 1659 until it became the independent nation of Haiti in 1804. But it was the Haitian slaves who would later write the damning accounts:

Have they not hung up men with heads downward, drowned them in sacks, crucified them on planks, buried them alive, and crushed them in mortars? And after having flayed them with the lash, have they not cast them alive to be devoured by worms, or on anthills, or lashed them to stakes to be devoured by mosquitoes. Have they not thrown them into boiling cauldrons of cane syrup?"

(Paul Farmer, HAITI, after the earthquake)

Clearly, the work of Montesinos is not over.

ANTIPHON:

I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness
you must listen to me.

CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH

SIDE A Praise the Lord the God of Israel, for He has come to visit His people and redeem them. He is sending us a Mighty Savior from the royal line of His servant David.

SIDE B Just as He promised through His holy prophets long ago someone to save us from our enemies, from all who hate us.

SIDE A He has been merciful to our ancestors, yes, to Abraham himself, by remembering His sacred promise to him. And by granting us the privilege of serving God fearlessly, freed from our enemies and by making us holy and acceptable, ready to stand in His presence forever.

SIDE B And you, my little ones, shall be called the prophet of the glorious God, for you will prepare the way for the Messiah. You will tell His people how to find salvation through forgiveness of their sins.

SIDE A All this will be because the mercy of our God is very tender, and heaven's dawn is about to break upon us. To give light to those who sit in darkness and death's shadow to guide us to the path of peace.

ALL Glory to God throughout all the ages
Three in one and one in three
Now and in eternity. Amen. Amen

INTERCESSIONS

To our just and loving God, who does not want to do without us what God has decided to do with us, we offer this prayer:

With thanks for such prophets as Montesinos, and Las Casa who attempted to stir up the embers of justice and compassion in the Conquistadors, we pray to the Lord...

In reparation for the bigotry and hatred which led so many of our ancestors to oppress the Peoples of the Americas, we pray to the Lord...

In repentance for the times that our arrogance and pride led us to scorn the simplicity and accomplishments of the native people of Hispaniola and the Americas, we pray to the Lord...

That Emmanuel, God-with-us, will raise up the people of the Americas to a life of peaceful prosperity, we pray to the Lord...

For whom else and what else should we pray?

THE LORD'S PRAYER (a paraphrase)

Tender God,
Who lives in heaven and earth,
In human reason and passion,
You are the Holy One in our midst.
Your justice is our peace;
Your peace is our hope;
Your presence, our delight!
Make our hands, your hands;
Our hearts, your heart;
Our lives, your life!
Give us this day and always
A bread of freedom to share,
A cup of hope to pour upon the earth.
Forgive us our hatreds and walls.
Teach us to forgive the walls of others as well.
Do not permit us tests beyond our strength.
And deliver us from Evil's death-grip.
For everything above us and under us,
Everything within us and without us,
Must bend the knee
To the Glory of your Freedom,
The everlasting Victory
Of your Justice and Peace!

CONCLUDING PRAYER:

O just God, we who celebrate the coming of Christ into our world, are mindful of our need to pray for all of those who have been robbed of their dignity, gainful work, food and health. This day we join with them and commit ourselves to be messengers of Christ's light to all who cry out from the nightmare of their darkness. This prayer we make in the name of the same Lord of all, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one god forever and ever. AMEN.

DOMINICAN BLESSING:

CLOSING SONG:

Go Be Justice

Martin Willett WLP 2001