

Homily for the Fourth Sunday in Advent
20th December 2020. The Homily comes from Fr Augustine Koliti, St Francis, Duncan Village, East London and Vicar General of the Diocese.

+ *In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.*

THEME : WHO ARE YOU ?

We are in the season of Advent and at the start of the Church Year. This season is understood as the waiting and preparation not only for the coming birth of Christ but for the year and also for the return of Jesus at His second coming.

The testimony of John the Baptist.

John 1:19 – 23, (19) And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent Priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” (20) He confessed, and did not deny but confessed, “I am not the Christ.” (21) And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the prophet?” and he answered, “No.” (22) So they said to him, “Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” (23) He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness. Make straight the way of the Lord, as the prophet Isaiah said.”

This dialogue leads us to explore three necessary questions:

Who is John, the Baptist?

Who is Jesus?

Who are you?

Who is John, the Baptist?

When John started his ministry of baptism and forgiveness of sins, strangely people came in numbers to hear him and receive his baptism. The Sanhedrin sent a delegation to investigate John because people started to say John was the Christ, or Elijah and a Prophet. They had valid and sound reasons to think as such.

Some of the reasons were:

- i) The Jews were expecting a Messiah to come and rule over them.
- ii) Malachi, (the prophet) once said, Elijah will return before the great and dreadful day of the Lord’s coming. (Malachi 4:5 – 6)
- iii) They read in Deuteronomy 18:15 – 19, that the Lord will raise a prophet like Moses and they must listen to him.

When the delegation quizzed John about who he was, he denied being the Christ, or Elijah or a Prophet.

The delegation frustrated with the responses, finally asked John an open question,

“Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?”

John calmly responded as follows, “I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way for the Lord.’ “

John the Baptist knew himself....

Who is Christ?

John baptizes with water and Christ with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit empowers the lives of the faithful.

Jesus Christ is greater than John, and John testifies that he is not worthy even to untie Christ’s sandals.

John says, “After me comes a Man who ranks before me, because He was before me.

Jesus Christ is the Lord of all creation.

John knew who Jesus was, just as he knew himself.

Who are you?

If John is the voice in the wilderness, then who are you? What do you say about yourself?

It is a very pertinent question....

Are you a Christian?

Do you believe in the One who John proclaimed as Saviour and Lord, the Lamb of God?
Are you able to clearly define yourself just as John defined himself?

My identity lies in the Lord Jesus Christ who made Heaven and earth, and He is the source of all my inspiration and joy.

Are you able confirm this about yourself?

The questions we have asked all lead to the need to give an honest answer.

NOTE: John in his final answer, points people towards Jesus. He did not focus on himself but focusses everyone on the LIGHT (JESUS).

May the words of my mouth, + and the meditation of all our hearts, be now and always acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, our Strength, and our Redeemer. Amen

The Advent Wreath on the Fourth Sunday in Advent



The Advent Wreath has four candles around the border and one white candle for Christmas.

The first candle symbolises HOPE, the second FAITH, the third candle symbolises JOY (it is the pink candle) and the fourth candle symbolises PEACE.

Today we light the Fourth candle, the Candle of PEACE. It is the last Advent Candle on the Wreath. Here is the prayer that is said as we light the candle:

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” [Isaiah 6:9]

Let us pray:

Dear Lord,

You are Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father! Father, You gave Jesus the name above all names. In the greatest expression of love of all time, You sent Your one and only Son, Jesus, to earth incarnate. You sent Him to suffer and sacrifice, to serve, and to save. We stand in awe of Your plans, purposes, and miracles, Father God, we humbly thank You for forming us, loving us, and making a way for us to come into Your presence. As we anticipate Jesus’ coming during the [Advent](#) season, we imagine the angst in Isaiah’s heart, as he prophesied of the coming Messiah. Jesus Christ unites us. Bless us, Spirit of God, with the Peace of Christ. The peace that transcends all understanding. Peace, though we walk through a difficult time of isolation and loss this year, will guide our hearts home to Your caring and compassionate embrace. We long for Your coming, Lord Jesus! Fill our hearts with You ... with peace.

In Jesus’ name, we pray,

Amen.



Every blessing to you as you end your Advent fast.

I trust that Advent has been a time of growth and spiritual development, and that you have a new awareness of God's presence in your life as you approach Christmas.

Our Lord Jesus Christ has carried us through difficult times this year, and He will continue to bless us. He is our Good Shepherd.

+Michael