

Merry Christmas

Fr. Robert's Remarks



FR ROBERT MANSFIELD, SSC
VICAR GENERAL

Greetings, The Lord be with you!

Merry Christmas!!!

The late Fr. Thomas Hopko was an Orthodox writer for whom I have, for a long time, had a great appreciation. My first exposure to him was in the mid-1970s in a then newly published book called *The Spirit of God*.

Fr. Tom was a family man. He and his wife had children and grand-

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Fr. David Marriott, SSC: Christmas I, Comm. St Sylvester



FR. DAVID
MARRIOTT, SSC

In my travels to France, I have been reminded of St. Sylvester in two ways. The first was when I visited the Dominican monastery at La Sainte Baume, the site of St. Mary Magdalene's Grotto, high on a cliff. (<https://francetoday.com/culture/pilgrimages-france-walking-mountain-mary-magdalene/>)

The second was the church of St. Sylvester, near Puéchabon, Hérault, which I have visited regularly. The parish no longer exists, the church was built in the 13th century when there was a great need for

farmworkers to tend both the grape vines, as well of the Olive groves, with farmworkers having to walk 5 kms. from the village of Puéchabon early in the morning, returning late in the evenings. With mechanisation, the large workforces were no longer needed. The second problem has become more serious in recent years, with an ongoing shortage of ordained clergy: many of the

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Fr. David Marriott, SSC: Sermon for St. Cecilia (vigil)



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faithful in the province of Hérault might only have Mass celebrated two or three times each month, with 5 priests responsible for 26 parishes, many of which only having a Mass said occasionally

In 2023, our Kalendar celebrated St. Sylvesters Day on Christmas I, whereas this year, it is celebrated on New Year's Eve, when, I would expect, many people will be very occupied with other things, and not think about Pope Sylvester, who came to the end of his earthly life on that day, in what might have been his 50th year: Wikipedia tells us: 'his death on 31 December 335.'^{[3][4]} He filled the See of Rome at an important era in the history of the Western Church, though very little is known of his life.^[5]

During his pontificate, he notably convened the Council of Arles in 314, which condemned the separatist Donatist sect, and the First Council of Nicaea in 325, which aimed to resolve the Arian controversy. His pontificate also coincided with the baptism of Roman Emperor Constantine I.^[6]

Sylvester I's pontificate coincided with the construction of churches including Old St. Peter's Basilica, the Basilica of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem (Santa Croce in Gerusalemme), as well as the Archbasilica of Saint John Lateran.^[6] His feast is celebrated as Saint Sylvester's Day, on 31 December in Western Christianity, and on 2 January in Eastern Christianity.^[7] (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope_Sylvester_I)

Here is the homily from 2023:

From the Gospel: 'When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.' The word 'espoused' can cause us some confusion: indeed, in French, 'mon époux' is 'my husband', 'Mon épouse' is 'my wife': 'épouser' is the verb 'to marry'.

Whereas, Easton's Bible Dictionary defines espoused as 'to betroth'. The espousal was a ceremony of betrothing, a formal agreement between the parties then coming under obligation for the purpose of marriage. Espousals are in the East frequently contracted years before the marriage is celebrated. It is referred to as figuratively illustrating the relations between God and his people (Jeremiah 2:2; Matthew 1:18; 2 Co 11:2). (<https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/espouse/>)

The common factor between the 'betrothal' and the 'marriage' is what many of us have experienced in our own lives, being a matter of commitment: as we see in the Solemnization of Matrimony in the BCP, where the husband says, 'I *N.* take thee *N.* to be my wedded wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I give thee my troth', and the wife adds, 'I *N.* take thee *N.* to be

Fr. David Marriott, SSC: Sermon for St. Cecilia (vigil)

my wedded husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I give thee my troth'.

When I was married, using the 1662 prayer book, the husband did not 'give his troth': he 'pledged his troth', which I always felt was more significant as it implies financial commitment added to 'emotional': but that was at a time when many women did not work outside the home, and depended on the income of the husband.

Long before that, long before 1662, Joseph, having made his commitment to Mary in his betrothal, did have an option open to him if the situation was to have changed: when he found out that Mary was pregnant: 'Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.' In Saskatoon in the 1970's, I recall this building on Queen Street, across from City Hospital, being 'Bethany Home, Saskatoon, SK, established by the Salvation Army in 1938 – photo taken in 1994. One of the options for a pregnant young woman was to isolate herself by entering a maternity home like this one. Ms. Nancy Scharr writes 'they were all seen as "disgraced" and their lives ruined. The young women were believed to be in need of reform and the pregnancies, and subsequently the children, were hidden to prevent their mistakes from leaking into the rest of society'. (<https://www.theclayandglass.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/Unwed-Mothers-research-Nancy-Final.pdf-FOR-WEBSITE-PROVIDE-PDF-PG2.pdf>)

And Joseph could well have arranged something like this.

'But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost: and she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS; for he shall save his people from their sins.'

Now, consider this: there are many people who convince themselves that they have had a message that they should buy a lottery ticket now: but the numbers don't match. They are simply convincing themselves. But Joseph did have a dream, a true and valid dream: it was a measure of his faith in the power of God, that he was open minded enough to accept that miracles do happen to ordinary people, living ordinary lives, which transform their understanding of the power of God to change lives through the message of an angel, a flash of light in the darkness, a longing for his gentle care, as the psalmist writes: 'Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept *me from* the paths of the destroyer. Hold up my goings in thy paths, *that* my footsteps slip not. I have called upon thee, for thou wilt hear me, O God: incline thine ear unto me, *and hear* my speech. Shew thy marvellous loving-kindness, O thou that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust *in thee* from those that rise up *against them*. Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings. (Psalm 17.4-8)



Bonnie's Reflections: "DON'T YOU KNOW THERE'S A WAR ON?"



BONNIE IVEY (& LAD)

This phrase originated in Britain during the Second World War, and was used to rebuke anyone who complained about difficult circumstances. Today we are living in a different kind of war, a spiritual war. Most people don't know it. It is as though we were born in a prisoner of war camp, but think we are living in freedom, in total control of our own lives.

"Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armor of light..." (Collect for the First Sunday in Advent: repeated throughout the season.)

A recurring theme in the Bible is the opposition of darkness and light. Jesus said "I have come into this world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness." (John 12:44) Light is associated in the Bible with life, truth, and living in accordance with God's pattern for our lives. Darkness is linked with ignorance, evil, death, separation from God. Satan's kingdom is the kingdom of darkness. Paul was sent as a missionary to "...open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God..." (Acts 26:18) When someone is totally unaware of something, we say "He's in the dark". Satan's intention is to keep us in the dark about spiritual warfare. Some of his works of darkness include persuading people to lie about God, and weakening the faith of others so they accept these lies. Every war includes propaganda and "disinformation." The media, especially social media, increasingly promote lies about God and those who serve him.

Even worse, there is a Fifth Column operating within the church as a whole, and even inside ourselves. A Fifth Column is defined as "a group of secret sympathizers or supporters of an enemy that engages in espionage or sabotage within defense lines or national borders." This clandestine force is called by scripture "The Flesh". It represents our natural inclinations. Some of these are good; some not. You may not act out your road rage when provoked, but still use choice insults under your breath. But Jesus warns against judging another to be a fool. How often we excuse our behavior with phrases like "Everyone does it. Nobody will miss it. She'll never know. It's harmless. Just one look. I was drunk at the time. It's your word against mine. The guy owes me. She had it coming. I don't feel like it." This is the flesh talking. Christians have been led far from God by this voice.

How do we remain true to our loyalty as Christians? The first step is **"casting off the works of darkness"**. Do I need help to learn what God has said about this matter? Do I need to repent? Do I need to seek counsel from a spiritual advisor? Do I need to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation?

We need to put on the armor of light. The Prayer Book emphasizes this during Advent, the season in which we not only anticipate Christ's incarnation, but reflect on his coming again as our Judge on the Last Day. The phrase comes from Paul's letter to the Romans, chapter 13. Paul paints the scene in an armed camp. Dawn is coming, enemies approaching. The watchman cries "Wake up! Put on your armor!" This is what Christians need to do. In Ephesians 6:10-18 he goes into more detail about spiritual armor. This is essential knowledge. Many books and online Bible studies are available to us. Ask your pastor to preach about it. I will

Bonnie's Reflections: "DON'T YOU KNOW THERE'S A WAR ON?"

mention one piece of armor now: the belt of truth.

Soldier, you need a belt. If you don't have this, Satan can catch you with your pants down. You will trip and fall. You will have nothing on which to hang your spiritual weapon, the sword of truth, "which is the word of God." (Eph.6:14) In this world of misinformation and opinion, we need solid knowledge of what God has said. Without it we risk being deceived and drawn away from our Lord.



Fr. David Marriott, SSC: Africa Appeal December 2025



*Republic of
Cameroon*



*République
Démocratique
du Congo*



*Republic of
South Sudan*



*Republic
of Kenya*



Rwanda

Although the Appeal has now ended with the change of jurisdiction for the Parish of St. Bride of Kildare, it is hoped that we can remain in contact with the Dioceses in Africa, with an understanding of the challenges they face, the solutions they hope to achieve.

Congo, and Congo East.

On December 13th, 2025, the BBC reported that: **'US Secretary of State Marco Rubio has said Rwanda's actions in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo are "a clear violation of" the peace deal brokered by Donald Trump last week.** 'In a post on X, he said the US would "take action to ensure promises made to the President are kept", without going into details. Trump hailed the deal signed with great fanfare in Washington between DR Congo's President Félix Tshisekedi and Rwanda's President Paul Kagame as "historic" and "a great day for Africa, great day for the world".

But the M23 rebel group says it has "fully liberated" the key city of Uvira in an offensive the US and European powers [say is backed by Rwanda, external](#). UN experts have previously accused it of having "de facto control" of the rebel force's operations.

Rwanda denies the allegations, however, its presence in Washington was a tacit acknowledgment of its influence over the M23. (BBC: Farouk Chothia, Published 13 December 2025, 01:37 GMT, Updated 2 hours ago.)

The M23 militia, funded by Rwanda, took control of the city of Goma several months ago. Many peo-

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ple were shot, with many killed. A parishioner with the ACC was wounded by a random shooting: the Appeal sent funds for his hospital treatment.

Goma is 103kms, north of Bukavu, where Bishop Steven Ayule-Milenge has his Cathedral. Although Goma is the main commercial centre in Sud-Kivu, Bukavu is the capital of Sud-Kivu, and also has significant mineral deposits.

Bishop Steven wrote on June 19th 2025 (translated): 'This morning, June 19th, the BBC has reported here: 'Rwanda and DR Congo agree draft peace deal to end conflict'. (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cr795jjrnnlo>) However, the article also reminds us that: 'Peace deals between the two countries have unravelled in the past. Last year, Rwandan and Congolese experts reached an agreement twice under Angolan mediation on the withdrawal of Rwandan troops and joint operations against FDLR - but ministers from both countries failed to endorse the deal. Angola eventually stepped down as a mediator in March.' Perhaps, if either the Wazalendo or M23, are aware of this 'draft peace deal', either group might see this as a final opportunity to exert their influence and power, before they are forced to withdraw?' In the last week, the M23 has taken control of Uvira, a city close to the border with Burundi, and close to the shores of Lake Tanganyika. When I visited Uvira in 2007, Father Mamba Itongwa had only recently returned from a UN Refugee camp in Tanzania. Your Grace,

On December 11th 2025, I sent this message to the Archbishop: 'I have just received these messages from Bishop Lameck in Baraka, Sud-Kivu, and thought it should be sent on to you, translated. I could send the Bishop CDN\$200.00, but he is asking for US\$500.00. Baraka used to be several hours away from Uvira, but it seems that the road from Bukavu to Uvira, and onwards to Baraka, has been improved, as Bishop Steven advised. In Christ, David+: 'Thank you father, it's not because of the peace agreement, it's a war. the people of Uvira are refugees in Burundi. Even \$500.00 can help me. Thank you, Father. Thank you, you can help me what you have or more this amount according to the possibility.

Thu, 11 Dec 2025, 6:23 AM, mmokywa mtundu <mmokywamtundu78@gmail.com> wrote: Thank you father, it's not because of the peace agreement, it's a war. the people of Uvira are refugees in Burundi. Even \$500.00 can help me. Thank you, Father.

The Archbishop replied 'We are sending him US \$200 today - I think by Western Union. He confirmed that he is able to receive funds sent by that means. I am sure more money would be helpful, but that was what we could send in an emergency. Bishop Steven has confirmed the problem, though he thought Baraka would stay out of rebel hands much longer than .Bishop Mtundu guessed. With all prayers for Advent and 'the coming feast of our Redemption'. In Christ, +MDH

Kenya.

Here is Bishop John Ndegwa's message for December:

Advent greetings

We hope you are doing well, this being a cold season for you. Allow me to make my report as we ap-



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proach the end of the year.

1. **Saint Silas Lodwar.** We had set Sunday of 26th November as the day for us to mobilize anything we could send to him in addition to funds available. We were able to send him 2 sacks of clothes and other items as well as cash which he acknowledged receipt and was very happy, we wait for him to report to us on progress. We plan to send to him additional support at the end of December after what is at hand will be boosted by our ADVENT envelope collection.

2. We had **graduation** of two of our children and we thank God for the provision of education which is truly a great help in their future life and that of the Church. Ednah Munyiva who is studying as a health care assistant will be graduating on 19th December, her full report will appear in the December report.

3. We have been observing the weather at **Saint Mary's Kinangop** in preparation to drill the borehole. This is the third week without rain but the ground is yet to dry fully. Our maize is dry and will be harvested next week where I will travel to collect and prepare the road into the farm to make sure that the rig to drill the borehole will be able to enter the farm. We have been in contact with the borehole guys and we plan to drill this month if the dry weather continues as we expect.

4. On **Saint John's Kathaka**, we have already done a simple signage on the Church but more professional work will be done as we progress. On the land issue as required of a land bought on installment we initiated a second fresh search on the land just to confirm the lands details remain untampered with since the first installment was paid, we found the details still satisfactory. Since the land is as we had reported on the name of the deceased husband to Mrs. Kiama, she deposited the title deed and her husband's death certificate with the lawyer and we paid the requisite amount to initiate a succession with the ministry of lands a process expected to take one month from when we shall be able to pay the second installment and at least be allowed to do other long term developments.

5. On **Good Shepherd. Korogocho** we shall be reviving Saint Anectus schools from preparatory levels. Each year the pupils will be promoted to higher grades allowing the school to grow steadily in population and vision without strain. We have printed most materials and still continue to acquire more. We have in place a promotion team that puts up posters, distribute fliers with a view to have the school ready for opening on 6th January 2026. If the school is assisted to start up, it has been modeled in a way that it can smoothly run with very minimal assistance since it will be charging a modest and affordable fee. Also, the produce of our farms will help in the feeding program. Most importantly is that we still maintained most things from the former school such as classrooms, desks and blackboards and the cost of starting up again is therefore subsidized.

6. On **Resurrection Church, Kayole**, we were able to initiate the Advent wreath and the season has begun successfully. We have also for the last two Sundays commenced a pre planning committee for 2026 which has two main aims, one to plan for an ecclesiastical Diocesan 2026 work plan launch on 2th January 2026 at Resurrection Church, Kayole where all parishes will assemble to launch the plan. Second to plan for the 2026 Diocesan Synod at Saint John's Kathaka on 27th to 29th March 2026.

7. The **Bishop's office** has put in place the *Diocesan development plan* for 2026 as well as an *ecclesiastical plan* which are attached. The key matter of the plan is that the bishop intends to take a non-vacation sab-

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batical leave by resuming my studies at Africa International University which I had suspended 10 years ago, due to lack of transport from Kayole to Karen where the university is located. That opportunity, if granted by God, will come with several advantages. One to psychologically and mentally remain actively busy even when there are little resources to do development thus avoiding blood pressure related complications and secondly to continue exposing the ACC on higher levels and upgrade the status of the church from the slummy identity that we have held for long enough.

8. Another matter in the development plan is Saint Patrick's mission. First is the house rent matter. The house they use for worship has become smaller and they wish to look for a bigger house to rent as the cost on the plan indicates. In 2013 when the battle was fierce, Saint Patrick was one of the few that remained in ACC in Kirinyaga when all other missions were disrupted. If God shall provide for them to migrate to their own land and be able to do some development, they shall feel grateful to God.

9. Another matter is the vestment and uniform project which need to be revived. The best thing is that the Archdeacon and his wife are tailors, but they lack an embroidery machine to help make logos on uniforms especially sweaters as well as making Christograms for chasubles, which are very expensive. A simple 2 needle embroidery machine will be cheaper though the advanced one will be very expensive. The acquisition of the simple machine will help reduce the cost of making Christograms for chasubles and logos for school uniform sweaters and make these available to our priests and school children with friendly availability

Again we wish you all the best during this advent season.

In Christ

John Ndegwa
Nairobi, Kenya

The Right Reverend John Ndegwa
Bishop Ordinary, Diocese of Kenya
[Anglican Catholic Church](#)



Did you know?

ANAGRAMS:

- ♦ LISTEN is an anagram of SILENT. Perhaps a point worth considering regarding the life of prayer is that one is more likely to hear the voice of God if one stops talking for a while and just listens.
- ♦ In a late 1980s issue of the quarterly *samizdat* called **The Rock** which he produced for many years, Bishop Robert Crawley noted that a collective of Bishops ought to be called a FIZZ because EPISCOPAL was an anagram of PEPSI COLA.



How to support these churches:

There are no deductions from money received by the Appeal; the full dollar amount is sent to Cameroon, Congo, South Sudan, Rwanda or Kenya. Administrative costs, e.g., money transfer fees, are paid from gifts received for this purpose.

In Canada

Please note that in Canada, no donations will be accepted for the Africa Appeal after November 1, 2025.

In the USA

The St. Paul Missionary Society, The Anglican Catholic Church, PO Box 5223, Athens, GA 30604

In Australia and New Zealand

Anglican Catholic Church Missionary Diocese of Australia and New Zealand Appeal Fund

By cheque made out to: ACC (OP) DAT and sent to

Missionary Diocese of Australia and New Zealand

C/- 5 Fallow St

Chermside West, Qld. 4032 Australia

If you intend the donation for a special ACC (OP) project, please let us know, so we can designate it accordingly.

By Direct Deposit to:

Anglican Catholic Church (OP) Diocesan Administrative Trust
or ACC (OP) DAT (for short)

BSB 034-064

A/c 335868

Please note the intentions for the donation on the direct deposit details.

Please be aware that given the current Australian Law situation, we are unable to offer any tax deductible receipts.

In the UK

Cheques should be made payable to Anglican Catholic Church - Diocese of the United Kingdom and marked on the back "Mission". If you would like to designate a particular county please indicate which one. Mail to: Diocesan Treasurer, ACC Diocesan Office, St Nicholas House, 42-48 High Street, Lydd, Kent TN29 9AN.

Fr. Robert's Remarks

children and I have no doubt that they enjoyed the Christmas celebrations every bit as much as I do, every bit as much as you do. I pray and trust that you will have a blessed and joyful Christmas.

One of Fr. Tom's books is *The Winter Pascha*. This book is a series of 40 reflections for Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, and the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple (which we know as the Purification or the Presentation). In this book there is a section that I should like to share with you. It is a quote that takes us to the centre of what it is all about.—the "serious business" as Fr. Tom called it when he wrote,

Jesus Christ, the Son, Word, and Image of God, is physically and spiritually formed in the body of Mary so that He might be formed in us as well (see Gal 4:19). This is the meaning of Christmas, which is the meaning of life itself: Christ in us and we in Christ, God with us and we with God. The Spirit in our hearts so that the Spirit can flow out from us, sanctifying the world around us. This is not mere symbolism, the high-blown language of the liturgy and the scriptures. This is serious business. It is a matter of life and death. For we are either the living vessels of God—"earthen vessels" to be sure, to show, as the apostle again affirms, that "the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us" (2 Cor 4:7)—or we are, to use the apostles language once more, "vessels of wrath" to be destroyed in our wickedness by God's righteous glory (Rom 9:22).

As we go the way of the Winter Pascha the choice placed before us is clear. We can follow the "narrow way" that leads to life, or we can go on the "broad way" that leads to destruction (Mt.7:13-14). We can, like Mary, cleave to the Lord and become His dwelling place in the Spirit. Or we can through immorality and sin choose the death of the nothingness which we are unless the Lord Himself lives within us. "But he who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with Him" (1 Cor 6:17). (*The Winter Pascha*, p. 22)

We remember that Christmas is not just a commemoration of something past. It is not just symbolic of something. It is about the reality of "Christ is in us and we in Christ, God with us and we with God."

In this issue of the Traditional Anglican News, beginning on page 11, there is a reprinted sermon by Fr. Clem Ings. Fr. Ings too reminds us that Mary's Son would "be called Emmanuel, 'God with us.'"

(The reprinting of this sermon by Fr. Ings who is now, I believe, 102 years old, was a response to the fact that I had visited with him earlier this week.)

May God bless you abundantly as you celebrate and rejoice in the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ—not only from Mary but in you!

More next month,

R+



Fr. Clem Ings: A Sermon for Christmas time

A sermon for the rare occasion when a Sunday Service is required within the Octave of Christmas.

The text is from the Introit given for such occasions by the Anglican Missal.

While all things were in quiet silence, and night was in the midst of her swift course, thine Almighty Word, O Lord, leaped down from heaven out of thy royal throne. (Wisdom 18: 14, and part 15.)

In its original context, my text from the Book of Wisdom refers to the night in which the Word went forth from God to punish Pharaoh and the Egyptians by the death of the firstborn, so that the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt to the Promised Land would begin.

Now, on the night of Our Lord's birth, while all things were in quiet silence the Eternal Word, coming from the Royal Throne of the Godhead, appeared among men as a Babe in Bethlehem to make possible a greater Exodus; the Exodus to be accomplished in Jerusalem for the salvation of mankind from the bondage of sin. Jesus came to destroy the powers of evil; and He came not to punish, but for salvation.

The promises God made to the Israelites at their Exodus from Egypt concerning the coming of Messiah at some future time, begin their fulfilment with the nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, God incarnate.

We learn from selections of St. Paul's Epistles read on various Sundays, that St. Paul believed Christians to be heirs of the promises God made to Abraham and his descendants, the Israelites. In today's Epistle selection the childhood of the heir refers to that stage of man's spiritual growth represented by the Law given to Moses. But then comes the fullness of time when God sent forth His Son, born of a woman and then submitted Himself to that Law, so that by being made one with Him we might share in His Sonship. Our Holy Mother, the Catholic Church, arranges to make us a part of the Body of Christ on earth through Baptism, and later, at Confirmation, through the operation of the Holy Spirit, we are able to call God our Father as Jesus did.

In the Gospel selection for today, St. Matthew tells us that when St. Joseph, to whom Mary was espoused, learned of her pregnancy, his first thought was to spare her public scandal and to put her away privily. In his perplexity, he was granted a vision from God in a dream, which revealed to him the truth of the virgin conception, and that it was God's will that he should give Mary protection by making her his wife.

Mary's child is the Messiah. But among many Jews of that time, the belief was of a Messiah who would be a warrior king, leading the Jews to conquer their enemies. On the spiritual side a belief was held that Messiah would be the Saviour of the people, not from temporal enemies, but from sin and spiritual enemies. The token for which belief was true, is in the Name Jesus, "The Lord is salvation." Thus, says St. Matthew, was the prophecy of Isaiah fulfilled, that a virgin should bear a Son, and that he should be called Emmanuel, 'God with us'.

St. Matthew gives no details as to the manner of Our Lord's birth but only that all happened according to the will of God: Joseph did as the Angel of the Lord had bidden him, the Virgin bore a Son, and Joseph gave Him the revealed name of Jesus.

Fr. Clem Ings: A Sermon for Christmas time

The name Jesus is a derivative of the common Hebrew name 'Joshua' and this derivative was revealed from heaven. In Holy Scripture a special name represents the character of the person named, and Jesus, whose name means 'The Lord is Salvation' fulfils that meaning by becoming our Saviour. In Canada, we can be introduced to a stranger one minute and in the next we are calling him or her by the first name.

In the Bible, a name can be a very serious affair. When God made the Covenant with Abraham, God changed his name from Abram to Abraham to reflect the conditions of the Covenant. Jacob wrestled with the angel but could not obtain the angel's name, though in the process Jacob's name was changed to Israel to reflect his new situation in the promised land. The name God revealed to Moses in the burning bush is seldom, if ever, pronounced among the Jews because it is too holy for common use.

In the Middle Ages Christians in England led the Western Church in devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus, and up to a point some of the reverence survived the turmoil of the Reformation period. I remember being taught in Confirmation Class to bow the head when saying the name Jesus, and it subsequently seemed to me one of the distinguishing marks of Anglicanism, when the whole congregation made a bow during the saying of the Creed in Services.

St. Bernard of Clairvaux liked to compare the Holy Name of Jesus to the Oil of Anointing, which of course is always Olive Oil.

1. Oil gives light when it is burnt as fire.

The Name Jesus gives light when it is preached.

The Name is the light of faith which so brightly shines in His Body, the Church, for it is by the light of this Name that God calls us into His own marvellous light. As St. Paul wrote "ye were sometimes darkness, but now ye are light in the Lord."

- 2; Oil gives nourishment when it is taken as food.

The Name of Jesus feeds the soul when we think on it.

The Name is nourishment in the sense of the Biblical injunction to call upon that Name and be strengthened, as food nourishes the physical body, so the Name of Jesus is the food required to nourish and enrich the soul, for the mention of Jesus is as honey to the mouth, as music to the ear, and as gladness to the heart.

3. Oil gives healing when it is used as unction.

The Name of Jesus wins grace and unction, when we call upon it.

The Name is Unction for we call to mind the many miracles of healing performed in that Name, both bodily and spiritually, as it has been from the days of the original 12 Apostles.

Fr. Clem Ings: A Sermon for Christmas time

Finally, if any of you have attended a death bed and the final utterance of the dying is the Holy Name of Jesus, and you see the peace that Name brings, you will have some indication of the power contained in that Name.

At this Christmastide, may God grant us a renewal in devotion to the Name of Jesus. Amen.



Of the Father's Love Begotten

1. Of the Father's love begotten,
Ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega,
He the source, the ending He,
Of the things that are, that have been,
And that future years shall see,
Evermore and evermore.

2. At his word the worlds were framèd;
He commanded, it was done:
Heav'n and earth and depths of ocean,
In their threefold order one;
All that grows beneath the shining
Of the moon and burning sun—
[Evermore and evermore.]

3. He was found in human fashion,
Death and sorrow here to know,
That the race of Adam's children,
Doomed by law to endless woe,
May not henceforth die and perish
In the dreadful gulf below—
[Evermore and evermore.]

4. O that birth forever blessèd,
When the virgin, full of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiving,
Bore the Savior of our race,

And the babe, the world's Redeemer,
First revealed his sacred face—
[Evermore and evermore.]

5. This is he whom seers in old time
Chanted of with one accord,
Whom the voices of the prophets
Promised in their faithful word;
Now he shines, the long-expected;
Let creation praise its Lord—
[Evermore and evermore.]

6. O ye heights of Heav'n adore him!
Angel hosts his praises sing!
All dominions bow before him
And exalt our God and King.
Let no tongue on Earth be silent,
Every voice in concert ring—
[Evermore and evermore.]

7. Christ! to thee with God the Father,
And O Holy Ghost, to thee,
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving
And unwearied praises be,
Honor, glory, and dominion,
And eternal victory—
[Evermore and evermore.]



For your reflection: *Of the Father's Love Begotten* is an early Christmas hymn written in Latin by Aurelius Prudentius Clemens, a writer/poet who was born in the mid-4th century. The translation is by the 19th-century priest, the Rev. John Mason Neale.



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GO YE INTO ALL THE WORLD

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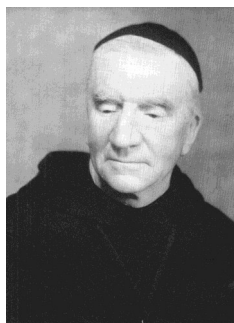
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FR. ANDREW, SDC

HIS OWN

'He came unto His own.'—St.
John i.

If we think of those words in S. John's Gospel, 'He came unto His own,' we may make a little parable to explain them. There might be a beautiful violin left on a shelf in a shop for many months. Then perhaps one day

there would come into the shop a great violinist, a master of music, and as he came to that instrument he would come to his own. He would come to the instrument that he completely understood, and he it would pick up and tighten the strings. He would handle it with the most perfect accuracy and certainty and precision, bringing it into tune and making it capable of that melody which it was meant to make. Not a hair's-breadth too much, not a hair's-breadth too little, would he tighten a string. The violin, too, would come to its own, as it surrendered itself to the master's handling, and would become capable of its utmost capacity of making melody.

In the same way our Lord has taken our human nature, and He, the great Artist, has made perfect melody with this human nature of ours. He has made the Divine Word audible through it. He has shown us that it is capable of expressing the divine music. When He comes to us, He comes to His own, to that which He perfectly understands; and as we surrender ourselves to Him we surrender to Him that which is His own, and we make ourselves capable by that self-surrender of giving a contribution of melody and service of which we could not have dreamed.



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