

Homilies from last Sunday

Homily for the Fourth Sunday of Advent – Year C

Readings Micah 5:1-4; Hebrews 10: 5-10; Luke 1: 39-44



Fr Michael says:

Mary, Model of Faith

We are almost at Christmas, but before we reach that moment, we share with Mary and her approach to this momentous event. She has left everything after she had heard about her cousin, to go to her. What can we draw from our Readings to help us enter her mind and heart? Micah affirms the salvation of the City of Jerusalem under siege, through a ruler who would come from Bethlehem to bring peace and humanity! This Ruler, in Hebrews, is Jesus, who replaces all the sacrifices and offerings with His own self – as a unique Gift to us all. How blessed are we!

Elisabeth will proclaim the uniqueness of the Child in her womb. We are seeing the blessedness of those who believe, as Elisabeth has said: “Blessed is she who believed that the promise made to her by the Lord would be fulfilled.” We have here the leitmotif which runs through Luke’s Gospel. Jesus affirms the centurion for his faith in Him by healing his servant. The woman with the haemorrhage, likewise and the two blind men are in the same place. The essential quality of this faith is action, belief must lead to it! Catherine de Hueck Doherty puts it well: “Don’t bother proclaiming that you believe, unless you act accordingly.”

Faith does not make things easy for us, in fact it can cause the opposite – it is because we have it that we will keep going on, with no guarantee of a happy outcome! This is where Mary is our role model, by showing how she did this in her own way. Hence we see the importance of her going from the news of the Annunciation to the Visitation of her cousin – first things first! She is the first and most perfect disciple and our “success” in life is following her in our own lives. Christmas is important to us particularly as we feel that God is really close to us. God is made present to us in the life of the One who lived on earth, His Son! Just as now there are those who believe this and those who do not, so likewise in Jesus’ own time – the Gospel stresses the blessedness of those who do believe. It involves us opening ourselves up to one another to receive the “Good News” with joy the message addressed to the shepherds. Like Mary we need to step back from what is going on, reflect on what is happening and then in trust in the person of her Son, walk with confidence in the choices that we make of serving God and those around us.

So we invite Jesus to come into our weakness, our fears and anxieties – our failures and our divisions. May His coming comfort us in our grieving, our loneliness, darkness and doubting; our despair and poverty of heart. May He enter our seeking, our joys and our hopes and finally into our dying – come, Lord Jesus, come. Marantha!