

Homilies from last Sunday

Homily for the Baptism of the Lord – Year C

Readings Isaiah 40: 1-5, 9-11; Paul to Titus 2: 11-14, 3: 4-7; Luke 3: 15-16, 21-2



Fr Michael says:

Jesus affirms His Mission of love which He has been given by His Father – to identify with us in all ways that He can – even to taking on our sins and failings, so that our Baptism reveals the fullness of the glory which is ours as created and enriched by the Father and our fragility as human beings taken and accepted for us to live out the fullness of the Redemption that is offered to us! The prophecy of the return of the People of God to the Promised Land is a partial fulfilment of this promise given through the Book of Consolation of Isaiah, the fullness is seen in Christ as Paul reminds Titus, who is prepared for it through the simple immersion in the waters of the Jordan, the words of the Father and presence of the Holy Spirit.

Do we live this calling out in our lives: where do we place ourselves in the parable which follows: in some countries it is illegal to be Christian, a couple were arrested because they stated very clearly that they were indeed Christian and were brought to trial and were defended by a lawyer paid for by other members of their family who had left their Faith.

His defence was brilliant: he stated he would show that despite their protestations to the contrary, they were not indeed Christian! The facts will show this. “They are a good-living family, hardworking and never involved in anything wrong, as far as I know” he said. “We can admire many things in their lives, they are sincere, faithful to the practice of their Faith, through Mass and the Sacraments – they are Christians of sorts, good Sunday morning ones – but this is not enough. Jesus said: ‘By their fruits you shall know them (Mt 7/15), by fruits we mean good deeds – this family has not got any! I do not find any evidence in their lives, their attitudes that they take Jesus’ teachings seriously – can anyone seriously accuse them of caring for the sick, the needy, those who are on the fringes of our Society – they have done no more than any of us have done, in fact they have done a lot less than what many of us have done and we would not call ourselves Christians!”

He continued: “The people I have been talking about were cared for by Jesus when He was on earth. In fact he went on to say that it was the response to their needs which would serve as the basis for His assessment of how they had lived. The first disciples were on fire to change the world; they would not recognise this family as one of them in that sense!”

At this moment the husband on trial stood up and shouted: “You are wrong – we ARE Christians!” “Words are not enough!” the lawyer responded. “Your lives have not shown you have given any support or care for those types of people; they are not as dear to you as you are dear to yourselves! I submit to the court that there is no evidence that this couple are Christians, in the terms I have just described! They are only guilty of self-deception!” The jury was sent out to consider its verdict – what do you think the verdict was? What would be the verdict if we were part of that couple on trial? Let’s just think about that for a few moments....