

The newsletter from MISSIO Scotland.

This is the third of our newsletters.

Come Lord Jesus

Benedict XVI says the Church's mission to evangelize is an answer to the Advent prayer "Come, Lord Jesus."

The Pope affirmed this on the 23rd December before praying the midday Angelus with thousands gathered in St. Peter's Square.

"The evangelizing mission of the Church is the answer to the cry 'Come, Lord Jesus,' which runs through the whole of salvation history and that continually goes up from the lips of believers," the Holy Father said. "'Come, Lord, to transform our hearts so that justice and peace are spread throughout the world.'"



On the Fourth Sunday of Advent, Benedict XVI dedicated his reflection to a consideration of the Dec. 14 note from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on evangelization.

"The document proposes, in effect, to remind all Christians -- in a situation in which the reason for being itself of evangelization is often no longer clear -- that the welcoming itself of the glad tidings of the faith moves us to communicate the salvation received as a gift," he said. "In fact, the truth that saves life, that became flesh in Jesus, ignites in those who receive it a love of neighbor that moves our freedom to give as a gift that which has been freely received."

Heaven and earth

The Pontiff reflected on Christmas as an impetus to evangelize.

He said: "Being reached by the presence of God, who draws near to us at Christmas, is an inestimable gift, a gift that is capable of making us live in the universal embrace of the friends of God, in that network of friendship with Christ that binds heaven and earth, that directs human freedom toward its fulfillment and that, if lived in its truth, flourishes in a gratuitous love and a concern for the good of all people."

"Nothing is more beautiful, urgent and important than freely giving to people what we have freely received from God. Nothing can exempt or discharge us from this fascinating duty. The joy of Christmas of which we already have a foretaste, as we are filled with hope, moves us at the same time to proclaim to all the presence of God in our midst."

Benedict XVI concluded his meditation calling on Mary, "the incomparable model of evangelization" who "did not communicate an idea to the world but Jesus, the incarnate Word," to obtain the grace for the Church to proclaim Christ the saviour.

"Every Christian and every community feels the joy of sharing with others the good news that God so loved the world to give his only begotten Son so that the world might be saved through him," he concluded. "This is the authentic meaning of Christmas, that we must always rediscover and live intensely."

Living Our Christmas

The Holy Father asks us to live the Christmas message throughout the year through evangelisation. We can all play a part in evangelising the world through our prayers for the work of the missions.

Priests and religious working, often in isolation, in the poorest parts of the world rely on our prayers to help them bring the 'Good News' to those people still waiting for it. Even in our busiest day we can spare a few moments for prayer.

The 'Living Rosary' is one approach to prayer for busy people. Rather than say a whole rosary we can split it up and a group of friends can each take one decade to say. They can do this on their own or as a group. It can be at any time of the day.

Need a rosary? No problem we have a supply of mission rosaries; each decade is coloured for one of the five continents. A 'Mission Rosary Guide' is also available. These rosaries have been blessed by The Holy Father so we can't sell them—we can only give them away. Contact us if you need a supply.

More and more groups are sponsoring student priests via the St. Peter's Society. Even if you are not a sponsor you can support the society by your prayers. Our students in Kaduna, Nigeria are living in a half finished seminary. That does not make the road to the priesthood any easier. Your prayers can make a big difference.

If you would like to pray for a particular student contact our office and we can give you details of a student you can direct your prayers for.



Mission Prayer Groups

Thanks to all the mission prayer groups dotted about the country. Keep up the good work. You will have a list of the Holy Father's Mission Prayer Intentions enclosed with this newsletter. If you don't have it give us a call.

Perhaps you could keep in your prayers Fr John Baptist Nivesige whom I visited in Wekomire Parish in Uganda recently. He and his assistant, Fr. Bernard Bitekerezozo, have a large parish with 82 outstations to look after. Not content with that he is building up a grotto.

There is rosary at 7 every evening at the grotto with over 350 people there. Fr. John does not put his own comfort before the needs of his parishioners. He is working hard to spread the gospel in a very poor area.

Your prayers could make many things possible for Fr. John Baptist and his parish.



Fr. John Baptist on Parish Visitation

Extra copies of this newsletter can be found in our website under 'Parish Resources'.