

Society of Saint Pius X

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SAINT MARY'S NEWSLETTER



DECEMBER 2019

My Dear Faithful,



We have now entered into a new season of Advent which ought to prepare us for a worthy celebration of Christmas. Advent is a time of great desires, a time when we should look forward to the feast of the Nativity of Our Lord because of all the graces which are attached to it.

The dispositions we should have during that time are similar to those of the just of the Old Covenant who, even if they should die in a state of grace, could not enter into Heaven because the fault of original sin was not yet paid off. In this way, we can imagine their anxiety, excitement or even holy impatience to see fulfilled the prophecies that were promising the coming of the Messiah. Indeed, prophets announced the coming of a Saviour who would deliver men from their miseries but before anything else from eternal damnation. This is what we too should be looking forward to: to receive Our Saviour into our souls so that He may transform our lives and lead us to Heaven.



As a consequence, this time of Advent should be spent with profound and joyful recollection. We must be convinced that God wants to show us again this year that He is still willing to come to us and pour many graces into our souls. Thus, let us spend this season of Advent with similar dispositions of

hope and holy excitement that we can see in the just of the Old Testament. When Christmas arrives for us after a well-spent Advent, it will be perfectly legitimate for us to joyfully participate in the material festivities of the Christmas season, but enjoyed with supernatural motives, never forgetting the real coming of Our Lord into our souls by grace.

The Church knows how to express this expectation in her liturgy whether it is in the texts of Mass or in those of the breviary. At Mass, we hear about this preparation, especially from the voice of Saint John the Baptist whose mission was to tell people that they were to prepare the way of the Lord. As for the breviary, the Church is stirring up our desires by what we call the "O" Antiphons. You will find more explanation about this later in this Newsletter. What is important to see through these antiphons is how the Church knows the person of Jesus Christ. She knows that He is the awaited Messiah; she knows that He is the Saviour of mankind; she knows that He is God Himself who wants to be near us all.

We all have some knowledge of Our Lord Jesus Christ, but Advent is a time when the Church wishes us to enhance this knowledge as we approach this magnificent feast of Christmas (Christ's Mass). Year after year, we should learn more about Our Lord, we should deepen our knowledge of God made man, the Word of God Incarnate. This subject is a real mystery. However, it is the mystery we need to meditate on during Advent so that we may fully recognise the value of the beautiful feast of Christmas. With Saint Paul, we should put on the Lord Jesus Christ more and more by begging His grace at this important time.

May Our Lord bring many blessings over this Christmas period to you and to all of those who are dear to you.

Rev. Vianney Vandendaele (Prior)

The Messiah

The Greek form *Messias* is a transliteration of the Hebrew, *Messiah*, "the anointed". The word appears only twice of the promised prince (Daniel 9:26; Psalm 2:2); yet, when a name was wanted for the promised one, who was to be at once King and Saviour, it was natural to employ this synonym for the royal title, denoting at the same time the King's royal dignity and His relation to God. The full title "Anointed of Jahveh" occurs in several passages of the Psalms of Solomon and the Apocalypse of Baruch, but the abbreviated form, "Anointed" or "the Anointed", was in common use. When used without the article, it would seem to be a proper name. The word *Christos* so occurs in several passages of the Gospels. This, however, is no proof that the word was generally so used at that time. In the Palestine Talmud the form with the article is almost universal, while the common use in the Babylonian Talmud without the article is not a sufficient argument for antiquity to prove that in the time of Christ it was regarded as a proper name. It is proposed in the present article:

- I. to give an outline of the prophetic utterances concerning the Messiah;
- II. to show how Christ vindicated His right to this title.

I. The messiah of prophecy

The earlier prophecies to Abraham and Isaac (Genesis 18:17-19; 26:4-5) speak merely of the salvation that shall come through their seed. Later the royal dignity of the promised deliverer becomes the prominent feature. He is described as a king of the line of Jacob (Numbers 24:19), of Juda (Genesis 49:10: "The sceptre shall not pass from Juda until he comes to whom it belongs"), and of David (2 Samuel 7:11-16). It is sufficiently established that this last passage refers at least typically to the Messiah. His kingdom shall be eternal (2 Samuel 7:13), His sway boundless (Psalm 71:8); all nations shall serve Him (Psalm 72:11). In the type of prophecy we are considering, the emphasis is on His position as a national hero. It is to Israel and Juda that He will bring salvation (Jeremiah 23:6), triumphing over their enemies by force of arms (cf. the warrior-king of Psalm 45). Even in the latter part of Isaiah there are passages in which other nations are regarded as sharing in the kingdom rather as servants than as heirs, while the function of the Messiah is to lift up Jerusalem to its glory and lay the foundations of an Israelitic theocracy.



But in this part of Isaiah also occurs the splendid conception of the Messiah as the Servant of Jahveh. He is a chosen arrow, His mouth like a sharp sword. The Spirit of the Lord is poured out upon Him, and His word is put into His mouth. The instrument of His power is the revelation of Jahveh. The nations wait on His teaching; He is the light of the Gentiles. He establishes His Kingdom not by manifestation of material power, but by meekness and suffering, by obedience to the command of God in laying down His life for the salvation of many. "If he shall lay down his life for sin, he shall see a posterity and prolong his days"; "Therefore will I distribute to him very many, and he shall divide the spoils of the strong, because he hath delivered his soul unto death, and was reputed with the wicked". His Kingdom shall consist of the multitude redeemed by His vicarious satisfaction, a satisfaction confined to no race or time but offered for the redemption of all alike. In spite, however, of Justin's use of the last-mentioned passage in *Dialogue with Trypho* 89, it would be rash to affirm that its reference to the Messiah was at all widely realised among the Jews. In virtue of his prophetic and priestly offices the title of "the Anointed" naturally belonged to the promised one. The Messianic priest is described by David in Psalm 109, with reference to Genesis 14:14-20. That this psalm was generally understood in a Messianic sense is not disputed, while the universal consent of the Fathers puts the matter beyond question for Catholics. As regards its Davidic authorship, the arguments impugning it afford no warrant for an abandonment of the traditional view. That by the prophet described in Deuteronomy 18:15-22, was also understood, at least at the beginning of our era, the Messiah is clear from the appeal to his gift of prophecy made by the pseudo-Messiah Theudas and the use made of the passage by St. Peter in Acts 3:22-23.

Special importance attaches to the prophetic description of the Messiah contained in Daniel 7, the great work of later Judaism, on account of its paramount influence upon one line of the later development of Messianic Doctrine. In it the Messiah is described as "like to a Son of Man", appearing at the right hand of Jahveh in the clouds of heaven, inaugurating the new age, not by a national victory or by vicarious satisfaction, but by exercising the Divine right of judging the whole world. Thus, the emphasis is upon the personal responsibility of the individual. The consummation is not an earth-won ascendancy of the chosen people, whether shared with other nations or not, but a vindication of the holy by the solemn judgement of Jahveh and his Anointed One. Upon this prophecy were mainly based the various apocalyptic works which played so prominent a part in the religious life of the Jews during the last two centuries before Christ. Side by side with all these prophecies speaking of the establishment of a kingdom under the sway of a divinely-appointed legate, was the series foretelling the future rule of Jahveh Himself. Of these Isaiah 40, may be taken as an example: "Lift up thy voice with strength thou that bringest good tidings to Sion: lift it up, fear not. Say to the cities of Juda: Behold your God. Behold the Lord your God himself shall come with strength and his arm shall rule." The reconciliation of these two series of prophecies was before the Jews in the passage—notably Psalm 2 and Isaiah 7-11—which clearly foretold the Divinity of the promised legate. "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, God the Mighty, the Father of the world to come, the Prince of Peace"—titles all used elsewhere of Jahveh Himself. But there seems to have been little realisation of the relation between these two series of prophecy until the full light of the Christian dispensation revealed their reconciliation in the mystery of the Incarnation.



II. The vindication of the messianic dignity by Christ

This point may be treated under two heads (a) Christ's explicit claim to be the Messiah, and (b) the implicit claim shown in His words and actions throughout His life.

Christ's explicit claim to be the Messiah



Under this heading we may consider the confession of Peter in Matthew 16 and the words of Christ before His judges. These incidents involve, of course, far more than a mere claim to the Messiahship; taken in their setting, they constitute a claim to the Divine Sonship. The words of Christ to St. Peter are too clear to need any comment. The silence of the other Synoptists as to some details of the incident concern the proof from this passage rather of the Divinity than of Messianic claims. As regards Christ's claim before the Sanhedrin and Pilate, it might appear from the narratives of Matthew and Luke that He at first refused a direct reply to the high priest's question: "Art thou the Christ?" But although His answer is given merely as *su eipas* (thou hast said it), yet that recorded by St. Mark, *ego eimi* (I am), shows clearly how this answer was understood by the Jews. Dalman gives instances from Jewish literature in which the expression, "thou hast said it", is equivalent to "you are right"; his comment is that Jesus used the words as an assent indeed, but as showing that He attached comparatively little importance to this statement. Nor is this unreasonable, as the Messianic claim sinks into insignificance beside the claim to Divinity which immediately follows, and calls from the high priest the horrified accusation of blasphemy. It was this which gave the Sanhedrin a pretext, which the Messianic claim of itself did not give, for the death sentence. Before Pilate on the other hand it was merely the assertion of His royal dignity which gave ground for His condemnation.

Christ's implicit claim shown in His words and actions throughout His life



It is in His consistent manner of acting rather than in any specific claim that we see most clearly Christ's vindication of His dignity. At the outset of His public life (Luke 4:18) He applies to Himself in the synagogue of Nazareth the words relating to the Servant of Jahveh in Isaiah 61:1. It is He whom David in spirit called "Lord!" He claimed to judge the world and to forgive sins. He was superior to the Law, the Lord of the Sabbath, the Master of the Temple. In His own name, by the word of His mouth, He cleansed lepers, He stilled the sea, He raised the dead. His disciples must regard all as well lost merely to enjoy the privilege of following Him. The Jews, while failing to see all that these things implied, a dignity and power not inferior to those of Jahveh Himself, could not but perceive that He who so acted was at least the Divinely accredited representative of Jahveh. In this connection we may consider the title Christ used of Himself, "Son of Man". We have no evidence that this was then commonly regarded as a Messianic title. Some doubt as to its meaning in the minds of Christ's hearers is possibly shown by John 12:34: "Who is this Son of man?" The Jews, while undoubtedly seeing in Daniel 7, a portrait of the Messiah, probably failed to recognise in these words a definite title at all. This is the more probable from the fact that, while this passage exercised great influence upon the apocalyptists, the title "Son of Man" does not appear in their writings except in passages of doubtful authenticity. Now, Christ not merely uses the name, but claims for Himself the right to judge the world (Matthew 25:31-46), which is the most marked note of Daniel's Messiah. A double reason would lead Him to assume this particular designation: that He might speak of Himself as the Messiah without making His claim conspicuous to the ruling powers till the time came for His open vindication, and that as far as possible He might hinder the people from transferring to Him their own material notions of Davidic kingship.

Nor did His claim to the dignity merely concern the future. He did not say, "I shall be the Messiah", but "I am the Messiah". Thus, besides His answer to Caiphas and His approval of Peter's affirmation of His present Messiahship, we have in Matthew 11:5, the guarded but clear answer to the question of the Baptist's disciples: "Art thou ho erchomenos?" In St. John the evidence is abundant. There is no question of a future dignity in His words to the Samaritan woman (John 4) or to the man born blind (9:5), for He was already performing the works foretold of the Messiah. Though but as a grain of mustard seed, the Kingdom of God upon earth was already established; He had already begun the work of the Servant of Jahveh, of preaching, of suffering, of saving men. The consummation of His task and His rule in glory over the Kingdom were indeed still in the future, but these were the final crown, not the sole constituents, of the Messianic dignity. For those who, before the Christian dispensation, sought to interpret the ancient prophecies, some single aspect of the Messiah sufficed to fill the whole view. We, in the light of the Christian revelation, see realised and harmonised in Our Lord all the conflicting Messianic hopes, all the visions of the prophets. He is at once the Suffering Servant and the Davidic King, the Judge of mankind and its Saviour, true Son of Man and God with us. On Him is laid the iniquity of us all, and on Him, as God incarnate, rests the Spirit of Jahveh, the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and Fortitude, the Spirit of Knowledge and Piety, and the Fear of the Lord.

(Source: Catholic Encyclopedia)

Gaudete Sunday Celebration



All the faithful
are invited
on **Sunday 15th December**
to stay after Mass and
share a **convivial moment**
with mince pies...

This celebration will take place at **Preston, Manchester, Rhos-on-Sea and Bingley.**

This is a good opportunity to increase the parish spirit by trying to know one another better. It will also anticipate the festivities of Christmas which we cannot have together on the proper day because of the different commitments from each one of us.

Saint Bernard's Seventh Sermon for Advent

On our threefold need of Christ

"If God be for us, who is against us?"
Romans 8:31.

My brethren, if we celebrate with devotion the advent of the Lord, we are doing nothing more than our duty, because not only has He come to us, but He has come also for our sakes, He Who "hath no need of our goods." Yea, rather it was our need of Him that induced Him to visit us, and the greatness of that need is clearly indicated by the greatness of His condescension. And just as the gravity of the disease may be inferred from the costliness of the medicine employed for its cure, so too may we ascertain the number of our ailments from the multitude of the remedies provided for us. For wherefore the "divisions of graces," unless they correspond to a variety of necessities? It would be a difficult undertaking to attempt to discuss in one sermon all the spiritual wants which we experience; but there are three which now occur to my mind, which are common to all, and which may be regarded as the principal. For there is not a soul amongst us that does not sometimes feel the need of counsel, of help, and of protection. It is indubitable that the whole human race labours under a threefold misery, a triple burden, which painfully oppresses every man so long as he lives in this region of the shadow of death, subject to the infirmities of the flesh and the assaults of temptations. For we are easily led astray; we soon weary of labour; we quickly yield to violence. We are deceived when we try to discern between good and evil; we faint and give up as often as we undertake a good work; if we endeavour to resist evil, we are promptly cast down and overcome.



Very necessary, therefore, is the advent of the Saviour; very necessary is the presence of Christ to men so encompassed with dangers. God grant that He may not only come to us, but that He may also in His infinite mercy dwell in us by faith to illumine our blindness; remain with us by His grace to assist our utter impotence; and stand by us with His power to protect and defend our fragility! For if He dwells in us, who shall seduce us? If He remains with us, surely we "can do all things in Him Who strengtheneth" us. If He "be for us who is against us"? He is a faithful Counsellor, Who never can deceive us or be deceived; He is a strong Helper, Whom labour never wearies; He is a mighty Protector, Who will speedily enable us to trample under foot the power of Satan and will bring to naught all his cunning machinations. For He is the Wisdom of God, Who is ever ready to instruct the ignorant; and He is the Power of God, to Whom it is easy to strengthen the fainting and to rescue the perishing. Therefore, my brethren, in all doubts and perplexities, let us have recourse to so wise a Master; in all our undertakings, let us invoke the assistance of so powerful a Helper; in our every combat let us commit our souls to the keeping of so faithful a Protector, Who for this purpose has come into the world, that, living here in men, with men, and for men, He may illuminate their darkness, lighten their labours, and guard them from all danger. Amen.

The Great "O" Antiphons of Advent



In the Roman Catholic breviary, Evening Prayer, also known as Vespers, always includes the great prayer of Mary known as the Magnificat. Each day, the Magnificat is preceded by a short verse or "antiphon" that links the prayer to the feast of the day or the season of the year. In the last

seven days of Advent (from 17th to 24th December), the antiphons before the Magnificat are very special. Each begins with the exclamation "O" and ends with a plea for the Messiah to come. As Christmas approaches the cry becomes increasingly urgent. These moving "O Antiphons" were apparently composed in the seventh or eighth century when monks put together texts from the Old Testament, particularly from the prophet Isaiah, which looked forward to the coming of our salvation. They form a rich, interlocking mosaic of scriptural images. The great "O" Antiphons became very popular in the Middle Ages when it became traditional to ring the great bells of the church each evening as they were being sung. Each of the "O Antiphons" highlights a different title for the Messiah: *O Sapientia* (O Wisdom), *O Adonai* (O Lord), *O Radix Jesse* (O Root of Jesse), *O Clavis David* (O Key of David), *O Oriens* (O Rising Sun), *O Rex Gentium* (O King of the Nations), and *O Emmanuel*. Also, each one refers to the prophecy of Isaiah of the coming of the Messiah. A particularly fascinating feature of the "O Antiphons" is that the first letter of each invocation, when read backwards, forms an acrostic in Latin: the first letters of *Sapientia*, *Adonai*, *Radix*, *Clavis*, *Oriens*, *Rex*, and *Emmanuel* in reverse form the Latin words: **ERO CRAS**. These can be understood as the words of Christ, responding to his people's plea, saying "Tomorrow I will be there." Saying the "O Antiphons" as a family, whether during grace at meals, in front of the manger scene, or in front of the Christmas tree, is a wonderful Advent devotion. To make this devotion even more fruitful, read and meditate together on the Scripture texts on which the antiphons are based.

December 17th:

O Sapientia (Isaiah 11:2-3; 28:29): "O Wisdom, you come forth from the mouth of the Most High. You fill the universe and hold all things together in a strong yet gentle manner. O come to teach us the way of truth."

December 18th:

O Adonai (Isaiah 11:4-5; 33:22): "O Adonai and leader of Israel, you appeared to Moses in a burning bush and you gave him the Law on Sinai. O come and save us with your mighty power."

December 19th:

O Radix Jesse (Isaiah 11:1, 10): "O stock of Jesse, you stand as a signal for the nations; kings fall silent before you whom the peoples acclaim. O come to deliver us, and do not delay."

December 20th:

O Clavis David (Isaiah 9:6; 22:22): "O key of David and sceptre of Israel, what you open no one else can close again; what you close no one can open. O come to lead the captive from prison; free those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death."

December 21st:

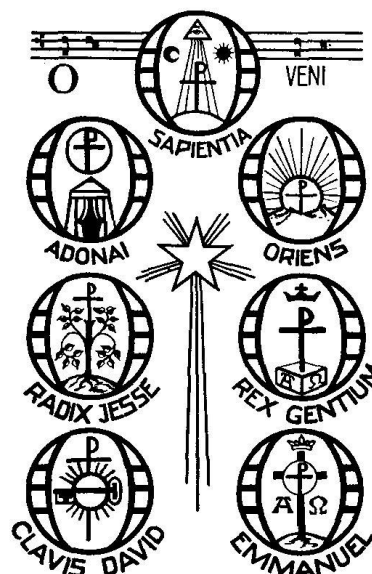
O Oriens (Isaiah 9:1): "O Rising Sun, you are the splendour of eternal light and the sun of justice. O come and enlighten those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death."

December 22nd:

O Rex Gentium (Isaiah 2:4; 9:5): "O King whom all the people desire, you are the cornerstone which makes all one. O come and save man whom you made from clay."

December 23rd:

O Emmanuel (Isaiah 7:14): "O Emmanuel, you are our king and judge, the One whom the peoples await and their Saviour. O come and save us, Lord, our God."



The Secret of the Rosary

Thirty-second Rose

Don Perez

Saint Dominic had a cousin named Don Perez, or Pedro, who was leading a highly immoral life. When he heard that his cousin was preaching on the wonders of the Rosary and learned that several people had been converted and had amended their lives by means of it, he said:

"I had given up all hope of being saved but now I am beginning to take heart again. I really must hear this man of God." So one day he went to hear one of Saint Dominic's sermons. When the latter caught sight of him he struck out against sin more zealously than ever before, and from the depths of his heart he besought Almighty God to enlighten his cousin and to let him see what a deplorable state his soul was in.



At first Don Perez was somewhat alarmed, but he still did not resolve to change his ways. He came once more to hear Saint Dominic preach and his cousin, realising that a heart as hard as his could only be moved by something quite out of the ordinary, cried out with a loud voice: "Oh Lord Jesus, grant that this whole congregation may actually see the state of the man who has just come into Your House."



Then everybody suddenly saw that Don Perez was completely surrounded by a band of devils in the form of hideous beasts who were holding him in great iron chains. People fled hither and thither in abject terror and Don Perez himself was even more appalled than they when he saw how everyone shunned him.

Saint Dominic told them all to stand still and said to his cousin: "Unhappy man that you are, acknowledge the deplorable state you are in and throw yourself at Our Lady's feet. Take this Rosary; say it with devotion and with true sorrow for all your sins, and make a firm resolution to amend your life."

So Don Perez knelt down and said the whole Rosary; he then felt the need of making his confession and did so with heart-felt contrition. Saint Dominic ordered him to say the Rosary every day; he promised to do so and he entered his name on the Rosary Confraternity list in his own hand.

When he left the Church his face was no longer horrible to behold but had a glow like that of an Angel's. Thereafter he persevered in devotion to the Holy Rosary, led a well-ordered Christian life and died a happy death.

Reception into the Church

Was received into the Catholic Church
on **Saturday 9th November at Manchester**
and then received Our Lord in Holy Communion
the day after:

Miss Laurie Hill.



Notices

Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord

Wednesday 25th December

Holy Day of Obligation

Mass will be offered at:

- ♦ **Manchester:** Midnight & 9am;
- ♦ **Preston:** 9am;
- ♦ **Bingley:** 12.30pm;
- ♦ **Rhos-on-Sea:** 12.30pm.



Feast of the Circumcision of Our Lord

Wednesday 1st January

Holy Day of Obligation

Mass will be offered at:

- ♦ **Preston:** 11am;
- ♦ **Manchester:** 12.30pm;
- ♦ **Rhos-on-Sea:** 5pm.

Feast of the Epiphany

Monday 6th January

Mass will be offered at:

- ♦ **Rhos-on-Sea:** 9am;
- ♦ **Preston:** 11am;
- ♦ **Manchester:** 12.30pm.

Sunday Mass Schedule and Locations

PRESTON: Our Lady of Victories' Church

East Cliff, off Winckley Square - PR1 3JH

Every Sunday: 9.30am — *Confessions from 8.45am*

MANCHESTER: Saint Pius X's Chapel

16 Deerpark Road, off Alexandra Road South - M16 8FR

Every Sunday: 9.30am — *Confessions from 8.45am*

LIVERPOOL: Saint Peter and Paul's Church

35 Upper Parliament Street - L8 7LA

Every Sunday: 1pm — *Confessions from 12.30pm*

RHOS-ON-SEA: Saint David's Chapel

Conwy Road (A547), Mochdre - LL28 5AA (North Wales)

Every Sunday: 5pm — *Confessions from 4.30pm*

BINGLEY: The Little House

Market Street - BD16 2HP

Every Sunday: 3pm — *Confessions from 2.30pm*

Ordinary Weekday Masses at Preston

(This schedule is subject to change; please check beforehand on the outside notice board or <http://fsspx.uk> — Mass Times & Calendars)

Monday:	11am
Tuesday:	11am
Wednesday:	11am
Thursday:	11am
Friday:	11am
Saturday:	12.15pm (Holy Hour at 11am)