

Catholic Women's League

Advent

Scripture Celebration of Light



St. Pius X Church

November 28, 2016

ADVENT SERVICE OF LIGHT

Opening Hymn: O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Greeting:

Advent is the season of anticipation and hope. It marks our spiritual journey. It is the journey of faith that Christians make after the moment of realization and acceptance of who Jesus is. We walk the road of faith increasing our understanding and look forward to our destination, which is to be in God's presence forever. Advent invites us to listen, ponder, pray, repent, expect and patiently wait for the great gift that God promised. Let us take time this evening to allow God's word to nourish and guide us.

Opening Prayer:

ALL: Dear God, we the women of the Catholic Women's League await your coming. Fill our lives with your presence. Fulfill our hopes and our dreams. Let your light break through our darkness as we announce the coming of Emmanuel. Be with us Lord, as we ready ourselves.

Scripture: Readings 1-6 (See Pages 6 – 7)

(Response to each reading: Let us walk in the light of the Lord)

A candle is lit at each response

REFLECTION: (See Pages 8 – 10)

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 9, 2-4, 6-7.

All candles are now lit.

Responsorial to the Reading:

RESPONSE: The word was made flesh and dwelt among us.

I paused on a cold winter night and felt the beauty of soft snowflakes upon my cheeks. I marveled at a presence more than mine in that moment of wonder. **RESPONSE**

I visited a dying woman in the hospital. I sensed her courage and her strength in the midst of great frailty. **RESPONSE**

I looked into the eyes of the clerk in the department store. They were the eyes of one who was tired and discouraged. **RESPONSE**

I walked past a homeless man on the street. He held out an ungloved hand and asked me for coffee money to warm him. **RESPONSE**

I went to church today and sang the songs of Advent yearning. I turned my heart to God who is always in need of a better dwelling place and I begged for my transformation. **RESPONSE**

I laughed and reminisced and enjoyed the moments we had known in years gone by. **RESPONSE**

I spent the early morning hour in prayer, asking God to tell me the meaning of incarnation in my life. **RESPONSE**

I read a letter from a single parent who still has no work. She grieves over the little she can give her children and worries about their health. **RESPONSE**

I opened the package that came in the mail. When I saw the little sprigs of fresh holly, hope sprang up in my heart. **RESPONSE**

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL: (Response: Lord, hear our prayer)

Lord. Our God, help us to prepare for the coming of Christ your Son. May our homes be peaceful and joyous for Christmas, and may we learn the true spirit of Advent: We pray to the Lord. **RESPONSE**

God of power and mercy, open our hearts in welcome of Christ, your Son. Remove the things that keep us from receiving Christ with joy, so that we share his wisdom and become one with him when he comes in glory. We pray to the Lord. **RESPONSE**

Lord God may we, your people, who look forward to the birthday of Christ, know the joy of salvation and celebrate that feast with love and thanksgiving: We pray to the Lord. **RESPONSE**

Lord, as Christmas draws near, Make us grow in faith, and love to celebrate the great feast of Christmas. Help us follow the example of Mary, who was always ready to do his will: We pray to the Lord. **RESPONSE**

Lord, help us to see the needs of others. May each of us share your love and joy with everyone we meet so that your light may shine more brightly in the darkness of this world: **RESPONSE**

THE LORD'S PRAYER:

CLOSING PRAYER:

God of life, God of hope, our hearts desire the warmth of your love and our minds are searching for the light of your word. As we await the coming of our Savior, increase our longing and give us the strength to grow in love. May the dawn of Jesus' coming find us rejoicing in his

presence and welcoming the light of his truth. We ask this in the name of Jesus who is God with us. Amen.

BLESSING: (Father Critch)

CLOSING HYMN: Christ, Be Our Light (#656, Glory and Praise)

1. Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.
2. Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has pow'r to save us.
Make us your living voice.
3. Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed.
4. Longing for shelter, many are homeless.
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
walls made of living stone.
5. Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come.

Refrain

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness. Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church, gathered today.

Scripture Celebration of Light

Scripture:

- 1. In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light", and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. (Genesis 1:1-3). Candle and Response (Let us walk in the light of the Lord).**
- 2. Again Jesus spoke to them saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life". (John 8: 12) Candle and Response.**
- 3. "We must work the works of Him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." (John 9: 4-5) Candle and Response.**
- 4. "I have come as light into the world, so that everyone who believes in me should not remain in the darkness." (John 12: 46). Candle and Response.**
- 5. Jesus said to them, "The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, so that darkness might not overtake you. If you walk in the darkness, you do not know where you are going. While you have the light, believe in the light so that you may become**

children of the light.” (John 12: 35-36) Candle and Response.

- 6. “You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under a bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5: 14-16). Candle and Response.**

Reflection

Before time there was darkness. Then God created the light and the darkness faded. Yet the world is still prone to darkness half of the time. A dark world is a cold world. A dark world is a lonely world. A dark world is a fear filled world. A dark world is an anxious world.

But in time there was light in the darkness. First by creation; and then, by the coming of the Light of the World. The darkness would never be the same again. It could rule only part of the time and could never succeed in the end.

The darkness of the stormy night was countered by the music of the eternal light and beauty. Peace..., beauty...., softness...., love...., joy..., simplicity! These are the qualities of light against the darkness. These are the qualities of the Light of the World.

Our personalities, enriched by Christ, are the light in the darkness of the world. Look about you. You see darkness all around you, but you also deeply aware of these small flickering flames burning brightly. Flames of light, hope, warmth, security, love and peace.

The light which is you, and you see, does two things in the darkness about you. It gives you a sense of security and for someone looking in from the darkness, it gives that person a sense of warmth.

When we sin we bring in darkness; we blow ourselves out; we extinguish our own light. We no longer light the world with Christ, through our personality. We lose our sense of security and hope and the on-looker is left in the hopeless cold darkness of a world without the warmth of Christ.

Let us now pause for a moment and reflect to ourselves. Have you ever turned out your own light to someone else? Blown your light out? Have you refused to light the darkness of someone's loneliness, of someone's anxiousness, or someone's need?

Now look around you in the darkness. It is still lit by these tiny lights. It is lit by the Light of the World, by Christ, by a flame of security and warmth that will never be extinguished,

Can you bring yourself to share in this light? Could you attempt to take this light to yourself and to others?

The world needs this light. He came to bring light to the world. He is the Light of the World! Christ needs you to bear it for him! Can you? Will you???

When you feel that you can and that you want to, come forward and light your candle.