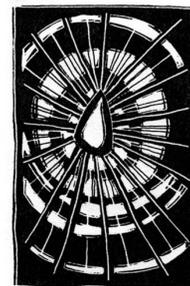


Christmas Day - Mass During the Day A - B - C



*In the beginning was the Word:
the Word was with God
and the Word was God. (Jn 1:1)*

First Reading

Isaiah 52:7-10

How beautiful on the mountains, are the feet of one who brings good news, who heralds peace, brings happiness, proclaims salvation, and tells Zion, "Your God is king!" Listen! Your watchmen raise their voices, they shout for joy together, for they see the Lord face to face, as he returns to Zion.

Break into shouts of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the Lord is consoling his people, redeeming Jerusalem. The Lord bares his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Second Reading

Hebrews 1:1-6

At various times in the past and in various different ways, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets; but in our own time, the last days, he has spoken to us through his Son, the Son that he has appointed to inherit everything and through whom he made everything there is. He is the radiant light of God's glory and the perfect copy of his nature, sustaining the universe by his powerful command; and now that he has destroyed the defilement of sin, he has gone to take his place in heaven at the right hand of divine Majesty. So he is now as far above the angels as the title which he has inherited is higher than their own name.

God has never said to any angel: You are my Son, today I have become your father; or: I will be a father to him and he a son to me. Again, when he brings the First-born into the world, he says: Let all the angels of God worship him.

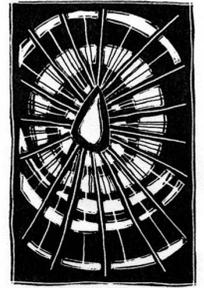
In the beginning was the Word: the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things came to be, not one thing had its being but through him. All that came to be had life in him and that life was the light of men, a light that shines in the dark, a light that darkness could not overpower. The Word was the true light that enlightens all men; and he was coming into the world. He was in the world that had its being through him, and the world did not know him. He came to his own domain and his own people did not accept him. But to all who did accept him he gave the power to become children of God, to all who believe in the name of him who was born not out of human stock or urge of the flesh or will of man but of God himself. The Word was made flesh, he lived among us, and we saw his glory, the glory that is his as the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Meditation

The Patriarchs and Prophets prayed for the coming of Christ in Bethlehem, and this first coming did not silence the groanings of creation. For, according to the words of the Apostle, which we have just heard, while man waited for the birth of Jesus in Judaea, the rest of the universe still waits for the revelation of Christ in His Church.

The mystery of Christmas therefore lays upon us all a debt and an obligation to the rest of men and to the whole created universe. We who have seen the light of Christ are obliged, by the greatness of the grace that has been given us, to make known the presence of the Saviour to the ends of the earth. This we will do not only by preaching the glad tidings of His coming, but above all by revealing Him in our lives. Christ is born to us today, in order that He may appear to the whole world through us. This one day is the day of His birth, but every day of our mortal lives must be His manifestation, His divine Epiphany, in the world which He has created and redeemed. (Thomas Merton, Seasons of Celebration)

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A man came, sent by God. His name was John. He came as a witness, as a witness to speak for the light, so that everyone might believe through him. He was not the light, only a witness to speak for the light.

The Word was the true light that enlightens all men; and he was coming into the world. He was in the world that had its being through him, and the world did not know him. He came to his own domain and his own people did not accept him. But to all who did accept him he gave the power to become children of God, to all who believe in the name of him who was born not out of human stock or urge of the flesh or will of man but of God himself. The Word was made flesh, he lived among us, and we saw his glory, the glory that is his as the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth.

John appears as his witness. He proclaims: "This is the one of whom I said: He who comes after me ranks before me because he existed before me." Indeed, from his fullness we have, all of us, received – yes, grace in return for grace, since though the Law was given through Moses, grace and truth have come through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; it is the only Son, who is nearest to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

Meditation

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