

Dear brothers and sisters, *buongiorno!*

On this second Sunday of Advent, the Gospel speaks to us about John the Baptist, the precursor of Jesus (cf. *Mk* 1:1-8), and it describes him as “the voice of one crying in the desert” (v. 3). The desert, an empty place, where you do not communicate; and the voice, a means to speak – these seem like two contradictory images. But they are joined in the Baptist.

The *desert*. John preaches there, near the Jordan River, near the place where his people had entered the promised land many centuries earlier (cf. *Joshua* 3:1-17). In so doing, it is like he was saying: to listen to God, we must return to the place where, for forty years, he accompanied, protected and educated his people, in the desert. This is the place of silence and essentials, where someone cannot afford to dwell on useless things, but needs to concentrate on what is indispensable in order to live.

And this is an always relevant reminder: to proceed on the journey of life, we need to be stripped of the “more”, because to live well does not mean being filled with useless things, but being freed from the superfluous, to dig deeply within ourselves so as to hold on to what is truly important before God. Only if, through silence and prayer, we make space for Jesus, who is the Word of the Father, will we know how to be freed from the pollution of vain words and chatter. Silence and sobriety – from words, from the use of things, from the media and social media – these are not just *fioretti* (translator’s note: a common practice in Italian devotional life in which someone offers a small sacrifice, a resolution, or the proposal to do a good deed to Our Lord or Our Lady) or virtues, they are essential elements in the Christian life.

And we come to the second image, the *voice*. This is the means by which we manifest what we think and what we bear in our hearts. We understand, therefore, that it is quite connected with silence, because it expresses what matures inside, from listening to what the Spirit suggests. Brothers and sisters, if someone does not know how to be quiet, it is unlikely they will have something good to say; while, the more attentive the silence, the stronger the word. In John the Baptist that voice is linked to the genuineness of his experience and the purity of his heart.

We can ask ourselves: What place does silence have in my days? Is it an empty, perhaps oppressive, silence? Or is it a space for listening, for prayer, for guarding my heart? Is my life sober or filled with superfluous things? Even if it means going against the tide, let us value silence, sobriety and listening. May Mary, Virgin of silence, help us to love the desert, to become credible voices who testify to her Son who is coming.

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THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT



HOLY MASS

Saturday: 05:30 pm English, Church.

Sunday: 09:00 am English, Church.
10:30 am Creole, Church.
12:30 pm Spanish, Church.

Weekdays: 05:30 pm English, B. Chapel.

Fridays: 04:00 pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Rosary.

05:30 pm Blue Chapel.

SCHEDULE OF SACRAMENTS

Baptisms: Contact one of the priests in person.

Marriage: Call the parish office for preparation before setting a fixed date.

Anointing of the Sick: Upon request.

Confessions: Everyday before Mass or by appointment.

Today is the Third Sunday of Advent and once again the Gospel presents the figure of St. John the Baptist. "In the desert prepare a way for the Lord." I hope that you are experiencing the desert in your lives this Advent. By this I mean that it feels or seems like, Jesus is taking a holiday from you. He seems absent. Your prayers can seem like they are not reaching heaven which also looks like it's closed. There's no response from "up there". The Lord allows such things in the spiritual life so that your heart can be prepared for the Lord to come. This sense of "absence from the Lord" is aimed at bringing you closer to Him. It forces you to long for Him and realise that you take His company for granted much of the time and that's not right. So He sends you into a spiritual desert to show you where your heart is and where it should be and the great distance between these two points. Then comes St. John the Baptist who calls you to see yourself and your sins in order to bring you to repentance, which means to have remorse for your sins. This is all to prepare for the coming of the Lord at the end of time, which could be very soon, given all the wars and violence in the world that is going on.

Secondly, today starts the Novena of Christmas, which means the focus of the season changes today from the second coming of Christ to His first coming. It's time to be in expectation that the infant Jesus can be born in our hearts and in our families and most hopefully in our world and bring with Him peace. He is called 'Prince of peace' after all. May all of our hearts be prepared for his coming.

Fr. Paul



HOLY HOUR

FRIDAYS

4:00 pm–5:00pm.

Rosary in three languages and reflection and meditation on the Holy Eucharist.

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

ADVENT



Morning Prayer
Monday to Friday:
6:20 am Red Room

Novena of Nativity:
Dec 16—Dec 24. 7:00 pm, Church

CHRISTMAS



Sunday, Dec. 24:
Christmas Eve 05:30 pm. English

Midnight 12:00 am multilingual

Monday, Christmas

day Dec. 25:
09:00 am English
11:00 am Multilingual

Sunday, Dec 31st: 05:30 pm. English
Monday, Jan 1st: 09:00 am English and 11:00 am Multilingual

Parish Events Dec. 17-24

Sunday Holy Mass: 09:00 am.10:30am. and 12:30pm.

04:00 pm Coeur de Marie Children's group.
05:00 pm Fraternite, Red Room.
05:00 pm Creole Youth Choir practice.
05:30 pm Sacre Coeur de Jesus, P. Hall.
05:00 pm Choeur D'hommes 1st and 3rd Sunday at church.

Monday

05:30 pm D. and Mass Chapel

Tuesday

05:30 pm D. Mass Chapel
07:00 pm First English Parish Hall
07:00 pm Second English SMG
07:00 pm Spanish Red Room
07:00 pm Christmas Concert

Wednesday

05:30 pm D. Mass Chapel
07:00pm Third English S.M. Goretti
07:00pm Fourth English, Red Room
07:00pm Fifth English Blue Chapel

Thursday

05:30 pm D. Mass Chapel

Friday

04:00pm Adoration, Blue Chapel
05:30pm D. Mass Chapel

Saturday

05:30pm Mass Church
07:00pm NCW Eucharist



School Notes

Holy Family Academy

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The HFA students celebrated the Immaculate Conception mass all together with all the school staff, asking a special grace to the Virgin in that special day.

www.hfa.catholic.tc

SPONSORS / BENEFACTORS

We continue to look for donations and sponsors to support our **Scholarship Program** and help the school with necessary supplies.

Your sponsorship payment can be done through direct deposit or bank transfer or by donating any of the items below.

- Scientific Calculators
- Projectors and projector screens
- Projector stands
- Canopy Tents
- Art Supplies
- Printing Paper
- Sport supplies
- AA Batteries
- Asthma Inhalers & AED



Click on our **Wish List** or scan the code to see more!