

Book of the Week
AN ADULT CHRIST AT CHRISTMAS
ESSAYS ON THE GOSPEL NARRATIVES
(MATTHEW 2 AND LUKE 2)
RAYMOND E. BROWN

LITURGICAL PRESS 1988 MINNESOTA USA pp 94

Part of the series referred to in last week's Book of the Week. The renowned scholar takes the key Christmas scripture passages and explores them in detail. Brown's musings remain fresh, informative and challenging. It will require effort but the work you put in will be rewarded.

FAITH MOMENT

The 'Word became flesh' in Christ
to be our model of
love,
forgiveness
and holiness.



Christmas Story Drama

Please note children who want to take part in the drama of the Christmas story at the Family Mass on Christmas Eve should be in the Church at 4.45pm at the latest. Pizza and (mince!!) pie party to follow.

Gospel Readings for the Week

MON	19/12	LK. 1: 5-25	He could only make signs to them, and remained dumb
TUE	20/12	LK. 1: 26-38	She was deeply disturbed by these words
WED	21/12	LK. 1: 39-45	The child leapt in her womb
THU	22/12	LK. 1: 46-56	Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months
FRI	23/12	LK. 1: 57-66	His name is John
SAT	24/12	LK. 1: 67-79	The tender mercy of our God



Christmas Eve

Family Mass 5.30pm
Night Mass 10.00pm



Christmas Day

9.00 — No Convent Mass
10.30 **Cór Naomh Bríd**
12.00

Week after Christmas
Monday to Friday

Morning Mass at 10.00am

No Evening Mass
on Tuesday



Eucharistic Adoration
And Divine Mercy
Meetings



Conclude from
Friday 23 December



Resume from
Friday 6 January

Rumblings from the Bunker



ARE YOU THE ONE?

Last Sunday we heard one of the most moving exchanges in the Gospels. I find it difficult to resist the interplay between the imprisoned John the Baptist and Jesus at the height of his public ministry. I really feel for John the Baptist in this passage. He is an extraordinary figure. I glimpse him in the womb at the beautiful encounter between Mary and Elizabeth. I see him in the wild, something of a colossus, straddling the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament. I see his wild hair blowing in the wind, his beard, the camel skin. I hear him bellow out the message. It is a message that is both urgent and without compromise. I hear his key word, repent, reverberate through the ages. The Baptist cautions us that we do not have an endless amount of time. I see him in the dungeon, listening to the music that accompanied the devious and seductive dance of Salome. Did he die calling Herod and his dysfunctional family to repent? Was his death a silent witness? Did he die with the name of Jesus on his lips? Was the sacred name simply filling his heart? Whatever about these glimpses, we visit him now in prison.

For all his strength, power and determination, we encounter a John who has a core question. Is he lonely, frightened? Is he being tortured or simply left to rot? Does he wonder what was it all about? Does he wonder what will happen? All of these may have some truth, but they are of course speculation. However there is no doubt about a very specific question. It is a question that seeks information but at its core essentially seeks reassurance. Clearly it speaks of something that has preoccupied him. So much so he charges some of his group to take the question to Jesus.

It would appear that questions play a key role in the life of Jesus. Many question the actions and words of Jesus. Why does he heal on the sabbath? How can he cast out devils? Where does his authority come from? Is this the carpenter's son? Indeed Jesus himself presents questions? What do you want? Has no one condemned you? Who do people say I am? In fact for hundreds of years before Jesus was born the Jewish people were always asking questions about the Messiah. When will he come? Will we recognise him? How can we be ready? What shall he be like? Will there be clear signs that he has arrived?

So with all that background we should not be very surprised at the question of John the Baptist? 'Are you the one who is to come?' In a sense it is the most important question. Perhaps it is the only question. The surprise is that it comes from John, and whatever about surprise at the source of the question, the real surprise comes in the answer. One would have thought that such a direct question, 'Are you the one?' would result in a straightforward, direct answer from Jesus. However this is not the case, and not for the first time Jesus wrong foots us. The answer given by Jesus to the question brought to him, from John the Baptist appears to be almost in code.

If in fact it is a coded message from Jesus, it is a code that John would have deciphered immediately. We must remember that both Jesus and John were brought up as God fearing Jews, mindful of the Judaic law and steeped in the Hebrew Scriptures. They were very familiar with the holy women and men of the Old Testament, and in a special way they would have been au fait with the prophets. It is likely they knew many scripture passages by heart. We remember when Jesus took up the scroll and read from Isaiah and informed the listeners it was being fulfilled as they were listening. His answer to John's wonderful question is directly from Isaiah, whom we remember was preaching eight hundred years before Jesus.

Answering the question, 'are you the one?', Jesus tells those who will be going back to John, to tell the Baptist what is happening. He wants them to tell John that the blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised to life. Essentially Jesus repeats what Isaiah had said many years before when he was describing the arrival of the kingdom. Of course he is describing a whole new world order. It proclaims God's mercy and love. However embedded in the answer of Jesus is a gem that could have been easily missed, and when John heard it, it must have been a pearl of reassurance. Jesus says 'happy is the man who does not lose faith in me!' Effectively Jesus points to the evidence of the breaking out of the kingdom of God and at the same time gives John the reassurance he needs. Once John would hear what is happening he would remember his boyhood encounters with the words of Isaiah that he and Jesus would have grown up with. This is the answer that he hoped for. This is the fulfilment of all the waiting. This is the messianic promise. This is God's kingdom breaking into the world.

As followers of Jesus do we recognise the kingdom of God breaking into our world? Are we workers for the said kingdom? Do we bring good news to people's ears? When people see us do they glimpse something of the Lord? Do we hint at, or nudge, people to his love, joy and peace ?

Mass Intentions

6.30 Saturday

Christina Cullen

9.00 Sunday

Walsh, O'Flaherty, Moules Families
Thomas Walsh, Dermot Dooley
Michael O'Gorman Snr. & Jnr.

12.00 Sunday

Mary Ellis, Tommy, Rita O'Grady
Paul, Ann McHenry, Paul Culbert

7.30 Tuesday

Joan Sexton, William Kershaw
Tony Elliott, K.J. Abraham
Dayne Cody



WEEKLY ROSARY IN THE PRAYER ROOM

From Monday November 21st 2016 the Rosary will be prayed in the Prayer Room at 11am. This is an initiative of the Marian Movement.

MORNING PRAYER

For Advent @ 9.40 Mon-Fri
All Welcome

LECTIO DIVINA

Each Wednesday In Advent
@ 10.30



Church Collection Totals

Week Ending	4/12
First Collection	775
Share Collection	540
Family Offering	940



Rest in Peace

Margaret McCaffrey
Maura Dwyer
Francis Delaney

*Blessings and Sympathy
to the Families*



Upcoming Events

Christmas Eve
Family Mass 5.30pm
Night Mass 10.00pm

New Years Eve 2016
11.30pm Special Mass
Celebrating New Year in the
Company of Jesus



Crosscare Food Appeal

Demand for basic food items from the Crosscare Food Bank now exceeds supply and they need urgent help with food supplies.

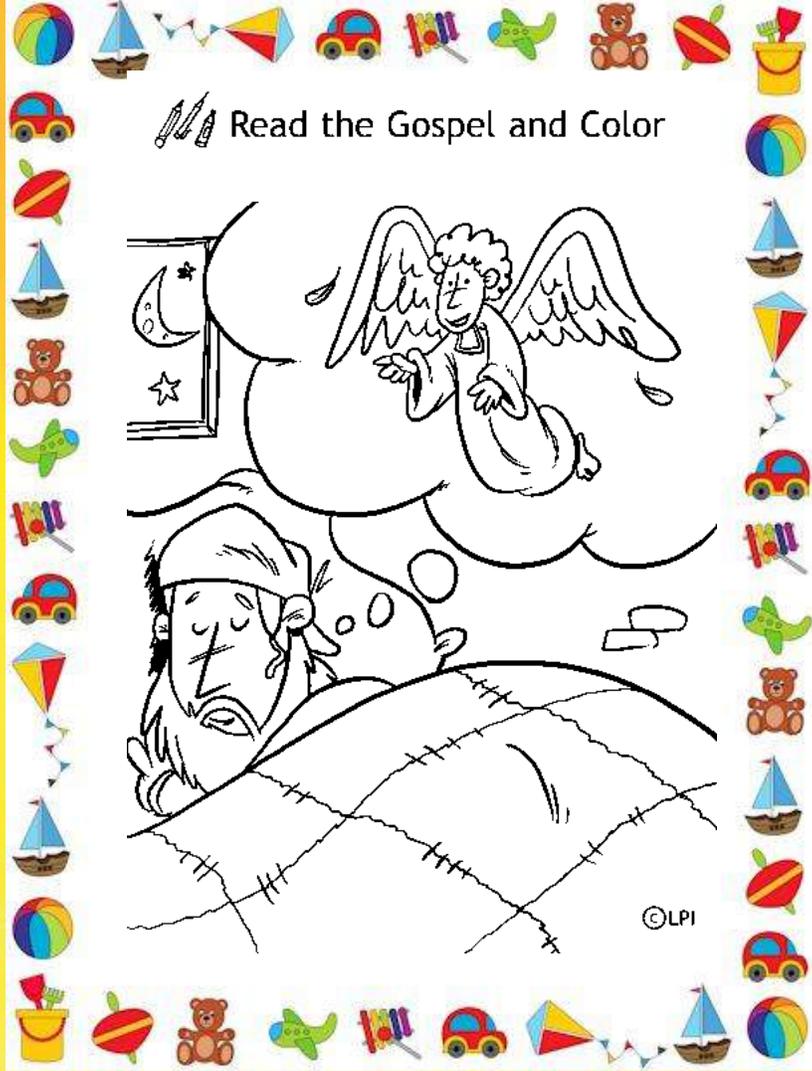
Types of food urgently needed include:

**pasta/rice fruit juice tea/coffee
soup sugar powdered milk
tinned meat/fish tinned veg/fruit
packaged desserts biscuits
hygiene products**

A basket will be left in the church
to receive donations.

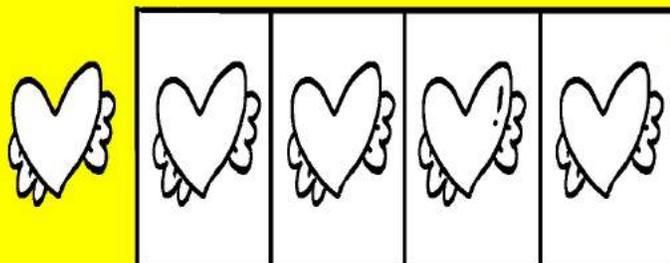
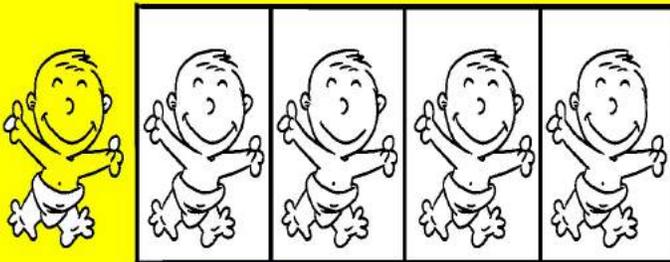


MOADUSZMDFHIC



Puzzle

In each series color the image within the box that is identical to the one outside the box. Make sure to notice all the details.



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Sharing the Gospel

God brought Jesus into the world as a tiny baby. Jesus was God's Son. He was so powerful that he could have gotten anything he wanted. But Jesus did not come to earth to be a rich, selfish ruler. He did not need a palace or fancy clothes. Jesus came to show you that God is with you all the time. He was born to be the king over your life. He gave up his own life to rescue you from your sins, so that you could be close to God forever.

Prayer

Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus to rescue me.

Mission for the Week

Tonight after dinner, ask your family to light some candles, turn off the lights, and sing some of your favorite Christmas songs about Jesus.

Caritas College

Top of the Table

For the second year in a row Caritas College has come out top of the League tables for university entrance in our locality. We are very proud of our students who worked so hard and thank our staff for their dedication and commitment.



6th Yr Leaving Cert Applied students brought their talents to the local community and provided manicures and nail painting in Ballyfermot Library.

Caritas SVP group

This group was recently established in Caritas College and their first activity is a Christmas Food Appeal. The students will be collecting food items for distribution before the Christmas holidays.

Upcoming events

Swap your Jumper for a Christmas Jumper

First Year Christmas Celebration

Annual Carol Service

Transfer Programme between Caritas and St Louise's

The transition from Primary to Secondary school can be a big leap for many students. In Caritas we try to make this transfer as smooth as possible and this year we have a new initiative. Stage 1 is where the 6th class pupils come to Caritas and try out aspects of their curriculum in the secondary school setting over a 6 week period. This week the students baked fairy cakes and did experiments in the science lab. Our Transition Year students are acting as mentors and we would like to thank them for their hard work.



French Week at St. John's

