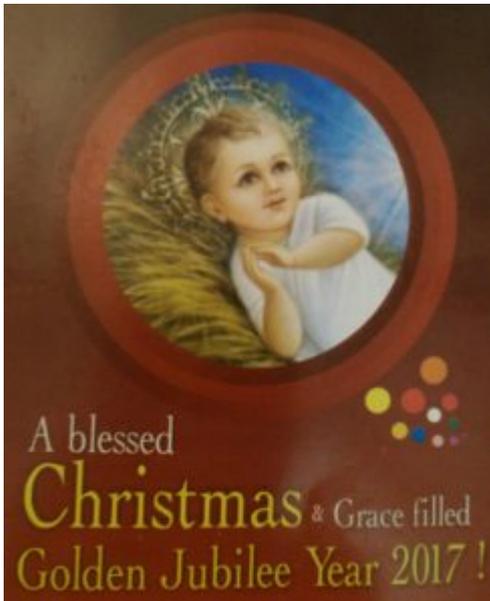


Joy to the world

“The King of the Heaven deigned to be born in a stable, because He came to destroy pride, the cause of man’s ruin” (St. Alphonsus Liguori).



Christmas is a celebration of the Feast of our Salvation. The Son of God has become the Son of Man, born of the Virgin Mary as the Saviour of the world, as “a light for revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of His people Israel” (Lk. 2, 32).

With His coming the light of the world has been dawned; the Prince of Peace is born to reign in our hearts forever. Let us adore this Holy Child- the ‘Immanuel’, ‘the-God- with-us’ lying in the mangers in the cribs of our homes, in the churches and in institutions. Let us realise that this Babe is happy in a lowly soul. Hence the economically poor and the ‘poor in spirit’ have more reason to celebrate Christmas. ‘Joy to the world, the Saviour is born’! The external celebrations, the colourful decorations and expensive food cannot substitute for this inner joy. The hour of God’s grace is closer to us than ever it was. This grace is open to all irrespective of cast, creed; ‘for every tribe and language and people and nation’ (Rev.5.9); and hence the Angel sent by God announced to the shepherds on the first Christmas night: “I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day n the city of David a

Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord” (Lk.2.10s, 11). If only we open our hearts to this Grace of God, flood gates of joy will be opened in our lives.

Let us pray: Lord, make us persons on whom your favour rests, so that we may be worthy to receive your blessings of joy and peace in this Festive Season.

Mary Pereira

Come Lord and save us



The_unfailing_Protector

Now a days we see many people going through a lot of misery in their lives. They do not experience the 'joy of living'. Some are so heavily burdened with the problems they face, and they even think of committing suicide. Why is it so? Does our loving Heavenly Father, who is our Creator God, want that His children go through such miserable lives?

The loving God has a plan of welfare for His children. He reveals it to Prophet Jeremiah: "I know what plans I have for

you, plans for peace and not for disaster; plans to give you hope and future” (Jer. 29, 11). Christmas is the time we celebrate the coming of this God who was incarnate and lived among us. If we call upon Him in our misery, He will answer us and come to our help. “When the poor cry out, the Lord hears and saves them from their distress” (Ps.34, 6). Let us turn to Him in faith. As we journey through the Season of Advent, we often become too busy with the mundane affairs, but let us not forget to spend some time with the Lord daily pleading with Him to intervene in all the miseries of our life; not only ours, but also of others. Let us have faith in this loving God who calls all of us to come to Him and rest. “Come to me, all of you who work hard and who carry heavy burdens, and I will refresh you” (Mt 11, 28)

Recently I heard a preacher explaining the meaning of the alphabets of the word ‘**joy**’. **J** stands for Jesus, **O** for others and **Y** for you. Jesus should come first in our lives; others should be second (and hence we need to turn to our brethren and help them in their spiritual and material needs); you should come last. When we have this attitude, we can really experience the joy and meaning of our living. As we give the prime place in our lives to Jesus and to His Word, like David who went through many crises in his life, we too can say: “even though I walk through the shadows of death, no harm would I fear, for you are there by my side. With your rod and your staff you give me comfort” (Ps.23, 4).

As long as we are on this earth we will encounter problems and trials. We experience a lot of negative things, things against our dreams and aspirations happening in our lives. But these problems should make us a victor, not a victim! Problems are challenges for us to overcome so that we may become victorious. This is possible only when we stop looking at the problems and turn to our Loving Lord who has become God Immanuel, God with us as the ‘Prince of Peace’. In order to become radiant in spite of the problems that we face, we only

need to look at Him. “Those who look to him are radiant with joy; their faces are never clouded with shame” (Ps. 34, 5). “All who call upon the name of the Lord will be saved” (Rom.10, 13).

Let us pray: ‘Come Lord and save us from this Godless, faithless, joyless and hopeless life’.

Mary Pereira

Immaculate Conception of Mother Mary



The doctrine of Immaculate Conception of Mother Mary teaches that from the very moment of conception, Mary was free from all the stains of original sin. On December 8, 1854, Pope Pius IX pronounced the dogma: "in the first instance of her conception, by a singular privilege and grace granted by God, in view of the merits of Jesus

Christ, the Saviour of the human race was preserved exempt from all stain of original sin" (Constitution- Ineffabilis Deus). It was confirmed by Mother Mary herself when she appeared to St. Bernadette in Lourdes in 1858! Before that in 1830 Mother Mary had revealed this truth to Catherine Laboure in Paris; but in obedience to the confessor she did not reveal it. Yes, in view of her

mission to become the Mother of God, and in view of the redemption that Jesus Christ would bring to us through his passion, death and resurrection, the Virgin Mary was conceived Immaculate.

In her life, she fully cooperated with the grace of God and led a life without sin, walking in faith. Hence the angel Gabriel sent by God addressed Virgin Mary: "Hail, full of Grace". She is the model for us to live a sinless life. The first Eve, 'the mother of all the living' (Gen. 3.20) brought death to the humanity, but the Second Eve, the Virgin Mary brought life to humanity and became the Mother of all the believers. As we honour Mary today, let us resolve to imitate her virtues; her faithfulness to God in striving to lead a pure and humble life, and her deep faith and trust in God. As the mother of every disciple of Christ, she wants nothing more than to bring us to her son, Jesus. Let us go to her, not just for our needs but to ask her to help us grow closer to the Lord.

Mary Pereira.

Immaculate Conception of our Mother

Today we start the Triduum -the 3 days of special prayer in preparation for the of the Feast of our Lady on 8th December