

SUNDAY PLUS



Come, let us adore him!

All our hopes

By Brian Fahy



"Nonviolence" ("knotted gun") sculpture by Carl Fredrik Reuterswärd
Greenburd / Shutterstock.com

In December 1918, United States President Woodrow Wilson sailed to Europe to attend the Paris Peace Conference. He would spend the next six months in France, together with many of the leaders of the world's nations, as they attempted to bring a settlement and an end to the Great War that had destroyed so much during four years of fighting. Landing in the port of Brest, Wilson took a train for Paris. As the train steamed through the night, Wilson's doctor woke up and, looking out of the window at two in the morning, he saw people lined up along the track. They had come out to watch the train pass by, for on that train they saw not only the American President go by but, travelling with him, their hopes for a better world.

At Mass today, we listen again to Luke's story of an angel, Gabriel, entering the house of a young girl called Mary. The hopes and fears of all the years are met in this encounter. Mary is asked to be the mother of the great hope of Israel, the Son of the Most High God. Luke describes how this meeting caused Mary great anguish, but when the angel assures and explains everything to her, Mary accepts the invitation to become mother of the Lord.

Like the people who stood beside the railway track in 1918, we too stand and listen to this Gospel as it is read again today. All our hopes ride on this encounter.


Brian Fahy, a loyal writer for *Redemptorist Publications*, wrote this for us a couple of weeks before he died. May he rest in peace.

Questions do not always have easy answers

By Natalie Claviera

Mary is the ultimate altruist. How many times have we, so willingly, devoted ourselves to the complete cause of another? How many times have we, so willingly, devoted ourselves so completely to God? Such questions are not easy to answer, yet such soul-seeking questions rarely are. Perhaps, rather than asking so many questions this Advent, we can instead become avid listeners. Like Mary, let us not be afraid, let us be present in the presence of our Lord, listen to his glorious word and do our best to fulfil our duty. Questions don't always have easy answers but in allowing the grace of our Lord Jesus to be with us, the right answers often find their way into our hearts and minds.

Natalie Claviera is the Head of Sales, Distribution & Customer Experience for Redemptorist Publications.

Little Lord Jesus, be born in my heart and in the hearts of everybody whom I know and love. Be born into this world. Make it heaven on earth.  Amen.

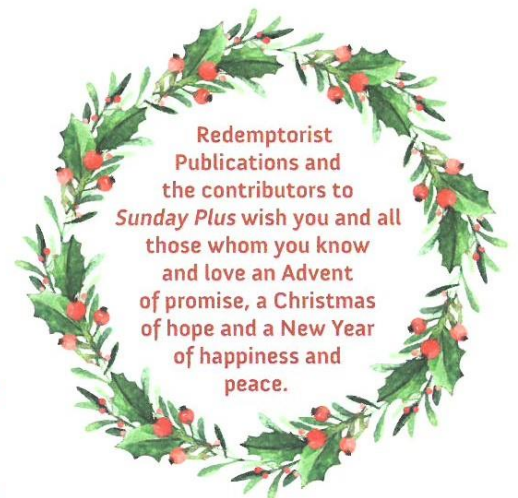
The tree and the Nativity scene introduce us to the typical Christmas atmosphere that is part of the heritage of our communities: an atmosphere of tenderness, sharing and family intimacy. Let us not experience a fake Christmas, please, a commercial Christmas! Let us allow ourselves to be enveloped by the closeness of God, this closeness that is compassionate, that is tender, enveloped by the Christmas atmosphere that art, music, songs and traditions bring to our hearts.

Pope Francis

What I can give

What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb.
If I were a wise man, I would do my part.
Yet what I can, I give him: give my heart.

From *In the Bleak Midwinter*, Christina Rossetti



Redemptorist Publications and the contributors to *Sunday Plus* wish you and all those whom you know and love an Advent of promise, a Christmas of hope and a New Year of happiness and peace.

Today: 2 Samuel 7:1-5. 8-12. 14. 16 Romans 16:25-27 Luke 1:26-38	Monday: Vigil Mass: Isaiah 62:1-5 Acts 13:16-17. 22-25 Matthew 1:1-25	Mass During the Night: Isaiah 9:1-7 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-14	Dawn Mass: Isaiah 62:11-12 Titus 3:4-7 Luke 2:15-20	Mass During the Day: Isaiah 52:7-10 Hebrews 1:1-6 John 1:1-18	Tuesday: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54 - 8:1 Matthew 10:17-22	Wednesday: 1 John 1:1-4 John 20:2-8	Thursday: 1 John 1:5 - 2:2 Matthew 2:13-18	Friday: 1 John 2:3-11 Luke 2:22-35	Saturday: 1 John 2:12-17 Luke 2:36-40	Next Sunday: Genesis 15:1-6; 21:1-3 Hebrews 11:8. 11-12. 17-19 Luke 2:22-40
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