

Waiting, Watching, Wondering

24 December

An Advent to Epiphany Course from the Diocese of Aberdeen & Orkney



Calendas--Christmas Eve Church Procession(1962) by Juan Ruiz Chamizo from the Smithsonian American Art Museum and its Renwick Gallery

Luke 1: 67-79

⁶⁷ Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke this prophecy:

⁶⁸ 'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,

for he has looked favourably on his people and redeemed them.

⁶⁹ He has raised up a mighty saviour* for us in the house of his servant David,

⁷⁰ as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,

⁷¹ that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.

⁷² Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors,

and has remembered his holy covenant,

⁷³ the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham,

to grant us ⁷⁴that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, ⁷⁵in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

⁷⁶ And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;

for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,

⁷⁷ to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins.

⁷⁸ By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon* us,

⁷⁹ to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,

to guide our feet into the way of peace.'



To ponder

Today's Gospel reading is the Benedictus, Zechariah's song of praise in response to the birth and naming of his son John (the Baptist). John the Baptist comes to prepare the way for Jesus, make the path straight and point to Jesus. We are coming to the end of Advent and we prepare to welcome the birth of Jesus, the Saviour of the world. In the midst of (what might be busy) preparations for Christmas, you're invited to take some time to think of this past Advent season. How has your wondering, watching and waiting prepared you to welcome the Christ child?

One of the suggestions to listen to this day is Winter Song by Sara Bareilles and Ingrid Michaleson, the chorus asks Is love alive? The answer tonight in the birth of Jesus – God with Us- Immanuel is most definitely yes love is alive – love of God for humanity.

The Collect for Christmas Eve

Almighty God,
you make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of your Son Jesus Christ:
grant that, as we joyfully receive him as our redeemer,
we may with sure confidence behold him when he shall come to be our judge;
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

Christmas Eve by Christina Rossetti

Christmas hath a darkness
Brighter than the blazing noon,
Christmas hath a chillness
Warmer than the heat of June,
Christmas hath a beauty
Lovelier than the world can show:
For Christmas bringeth Jesus,
Brought for us so low.

Earth, strike up your music,
Birds that sing and bells that ring;
Heaven hath answering music
For all Angels soon to sing:
Earth, put on your whitest
Bridal robe of spotless snow:
For Christmas bringeth Jesus,
Brought for us so low.

To listen to

Winter Song by Sara Bareilles and Ingrid Michaelson <https://youtu.be/hHJr07zU9Gk>

Longing for Light, We Wait in Darkness (Christ be Our Light) by and performed by Bernadette Farrell <https://youtu.be/kt3Qc04ulOM>

Come Thou Long Expected Jesus (performed by Sara Groves)
<https://open.spotify.com/track/3iOsinqlKepVjq8WdEfErm?si=d4bb8b591f4a44a3>

