



Christmas Words

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

House

Monday 30th December



House Model (Tea Caddy, made in England), Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum

Scripture: 1 John 2:12-17

I am writing to you, little children,
because your sins are forgiven on account of his name.
I am writing to you, fathers,
because you know him who is from the beginning.

I am writing to you, young people,
because you have conquered the evil one.
I write to you, children,
because you know the Father.
I write to you, fathers,
because you know him who is from the beginning.
I write to you, young people,
because you are strong
and the word of God abides in you,
and you have overcome the evil one.

Do not love the world or the things in the world. The love of the Father is not in those who love the world; for all that is in the world—the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, the pride in riches—comes not from the Father but from the world. And the world and its desire are passing away, but those who do the will of God live for ever.

To reflect

In Sunday's Gospel we heard the 12 year old Jesus say to his parents (who after searching for him for three days had found him in the Temple in Jerusalem) *'Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?'* . At the time the House of God was the Temple in Jerusalem. A more direct translation is that Jesus was in amongst the things of his Father – God.

Today the Scottish Episcopal Church remembers Josephine Butler (1828–1906), a woman of faith who, amongst other things, gave prostitutes a place to live in her house, in amongst her campaign for social reform. Houses are dwellings we may have spent quite a bit of time in over the Festive Season – our own place we call home, those houses of others, houses of worship -churches.

Where are the places that you call 'home', houses (of all kinds) that have allowed you to connect to God and your faith?

The House of Life: 66. The Heart of the Night by Dante Gabriel Rossetti

From child to youth; from youth to arduous man;
From lethargy to fever of the heart;
From faithful life to dream-dower'd days apart;
From trust to doubt; from doubt to brink of ban;—
Thus much of change in one swift cycle ran
Till now. Alas, the soul!—how soon must she
Accept her primal immortality,—
The flesh resume its dust whence it began?

O Lord of work and peace! O Lord of life!
O Lord, the awful Lord of will! though late,
Even yet renew this soul with duteous breath:
That when the peace is garner'd in from strife,
The work retriev'd, the will regenerate,
This soul may see thy face, O Lord of death!

From Ballads and Sonnets (London: Ellis and White, 1881). Public domain.

To Listen (these and other suggestions can be found on a Spotify playlist at

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0F5bU2sf4OiOrQY3q78Rf2?si=a99cbbf61e7d4587>)

- 'Here Is the Little Door' by Herbert Howells, one version is by Canticler. This is a setting of a poem of Frances Chesterton (18169-1938). This is about the Magi entering the place – the house – the Holy Family were in but the gifts speak to the adult Jesus' life, which we saw a glimpse of in Sunday's Gospel.
- 'In My Father's House' by Philip Stopford, one recording is by Truro Cathedral Choir.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.