

## “The today of salvation”: Jesus’ Encounter with Zacchaeus.

*The* salvation of mankind, although realized once and for all by Jesus Christ, at a determined time and place, is an ever present, dynamic and effective reality. As a revelation of meaning and a gift of life in fullness, salvation bursts into a person's life when he/she encounters Christ, through the Word proclaimed and heard. It is then the moment of “the today of salvation”, the beginning of a dialogue between a person's life experience and the Word of God.

In the Gospels we have many stories or parables like those of the good Samaritan or that of the Pharisee and the tax collector that we heard last Sunday. This morning what is presented to us is rather an event remembered by the disciples who were with Jesus. They told it to the first converts to the Christian faith. Saint Luke recorded it in his gospel with lots of details in order to show how to welcome God's salvation into their lives. It is very instructive and up-to-date for us because we are in the same situation as those first Christians: we want to welcome the salvation of God that Jesus brings to the world. Our approach to welcoming salvation, therefore, can profitably be inspired by that of Zacchaeus, which could be summed up by three verbs: to see, to hear and to respond.

“Today”, salvation is still offered to humanity. Jesus' invitation to Zacchaeus is not a past invitation. It is an ever-present invitation addressed to each and every one of us. “Today, Jesus tells us, “this morning, I want to stay with you”.

The gospels for us are the places where we encounter Jesus. They are the Word of God which continues to proclaim itself to the various nations and throughout the world. Through little stories such as parables and events in the life of Jesus such as the encounter with Zacchaeus, we follow him.

Let us ask this morning that our response to the invitations of Jesus that the Spirit calls forth in us be as prompt and as complete as that of Zacchaeus. Seeing, hearing and responding, this is what we are invited to experience as disciples of Jesus and so Jesus will say to us too, “Today salvation has come to your house”. This is what I wish for all of us.

## **SAINTS:**

**Martin Luther, Reformer, 31 October.** Martin Luther was born in 1483 at Eisleben in Saxony and educated at the cathedral school in Magdeburg and the university in Erfurt. He joined an order of Augustinian hermits there and was ordained priest in 1507, becoming a lecturer in the university at Wittenberg. He became vicar of his Order in 1515, having charge of a dozen monasteries. His Christian faith began to take on a new shape, with his increasing dissatisfaction with the worship and order of the Church. He became convinced that the gospels taught that humanity is saved by faith and not by works, finding support in the writings of St Augustine of Hippo. He refuted the teaching of the Letter of James, calling it 'an epistle of straw'. Martin sought to debate the whole matter by posting ninety-five theses or propositions on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg on this day in the year 1517. The hierarchy chose to see it as a direct attack on the Church, which forced Martin into open rebellion. The Protestant Reformation spread throughout Germany and then Europe, many seeing it as liberation from a Church that held them in fear rather than love. Martin Luther died in 1546, having effected a renaissance in the Church, both Protestant and Catholic.

**All Saints' Day, 1 November.** From its earliest days, the Church has recognised as its foundation stones those heroes of the faith whose lives have excited others to holiness and have assumed a communion with the Church on earth and the Church in heaven. Celebrating the feast of All Saints' began in the fourth century. At first, it was observed on the Sunday after the feast of Pentecost; this was to link the disciples who received the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the 'foundation of the Church', with those who were martyrs, giving their lives as witnesses for the faith. In the eighth century, a pope dedicated a chapel to All Saints in St Peter's at Rome on 1 November. Within a century, this day was observed in England and Ireland as All Saints' Day.

**All Souls' Day, 2 November.** 'The believer's pilgrimage of faith is lived out with the mutual support of all the people of God. In Christ all the faithful, both living and departed, are bound together in a communion of prayer.' This simple, agreed statement from the Anglican--Roman Catholic International Commission explains the purpose of the celebration on this day. Since its foundation, Christians have recognised that the Church, the ecclesia, the assembled people of God, is at its most perfect when it recognises its unity in God's redeeming love with all who have said, who say now, and who will say in the fullness of time, 'Jesus is Lord'.

## COMING UP:

Nov. 1. **All Saints' Day**, Eucharist 10:00 a.m.

Nov. 2. **All Souls' Day**, Eucharist 10:00 a.m.

Nov. 13. **Remembrance Sunday**, 9:30 a.m.

Nov. 17. Wedding, 2:00 p.m.

Nov. 19. Wedding, 2:00 p.m.

Nov. 20. *Santuario de San Antonio, Union Church of Manila & Holy Trinity Church*) **Joint Thanksgiving**

**Service & Dinner, 6:30 p.m. Donations are requested. Please refer to the sign-up paper on the board by the parish office. Thank you.**

Dec. 2. Wedding, 2:00 p.m.

Dec. 17. Wedding, 2:30 p.m.

Dec. 18. Wedding, 2:00 p.m.

**Advent Lessons and Carols - TBA**