

GOD'S CONDESCENSION IN JESUS

Except for a pilgrimage in Jerusalem when Jesus was 12 years old, when he was lost and later found in the Temple sitting amidst the teachers of the Law, nothing is recorded in the Gospels about Jesus' life in Nazareth until he started his preaching ministry at 30 years of age. It was a "hidden life" during which Jesus grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was with him.

Living an ordinary life in Nazareth is part of the "kenosis" or Jesus, his self-emptying of his divine nature. It is a condescension of God, his voluntary act of coming down from his divine, exalted state to act with and be present among humanity, that demonstrates humility and love.

In humble surroundings of Nazareth, Jesus was known as the son of Joseph, and his mother was called Mary. He played with children his age, and learned and took up an occupation. He labored with his hands and loved with human heart. He was known as a *tekton*, a term that encompasses a range of building and crafting skills, not just carpentry. His work with his hands demonstrates his humility and solidarity with ordinary people. His family and townsmen could not have expected to see him more than a familiar face in Nazareth.

Then Jesus left Nazareth and preached in the towns and villages surrounding the Sea of Galilee, astounding people with the authority of his teaching and his deeds. His fame spread to

Fr. Gil A. Alinsangan, SSP

all of Syria, and great crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan followed him (Mt 4:24-25). A quick Google at these places will show how news about him has spread quickly, far and wide.

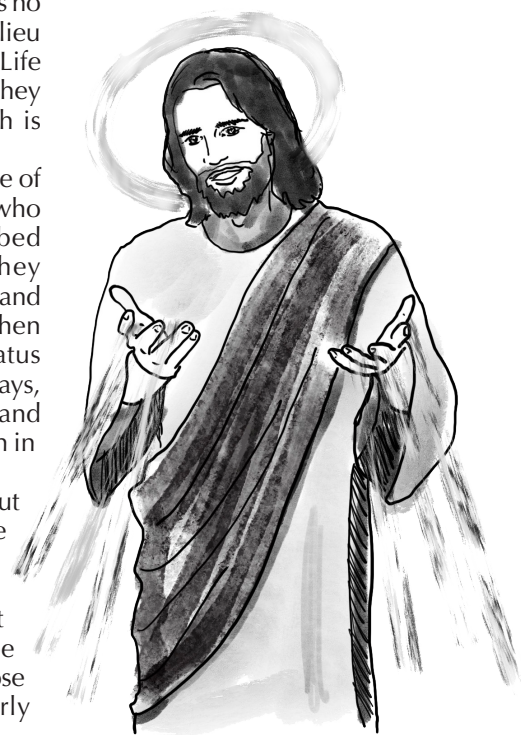
One day, Jesus returns to his home town, Nazareth. His townsmen ought to be proud of him and to feel honored by his presence. Instead, they oppose and belittle him. They think they know him too well to pass a fair judgment on him. They think that Jesus' humble origins do not qualify him for the fame and acclaim he is now enjoying. They are convinced that someone of their kind has no capacity to transcend his milieu and rise above mediocrity. Life without faith in a preacher they presume to be familiar with is comfortable and easy.

The reaction of the people of Nazareth is that of people who do not want to be disturbed in their comfort zone. They discredit the prophet of God and declare him a disturber. Then they go along with the status quo and their complacent ways, unmindful of the deep joy and authentic liberation that faith in Christ brings.

"A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and in his own house." Pope Francis has referenced this saying of Jesus to highlight the tendency of people to be skeptical or dismissive of those they know well, particularly

when they present message that challenges their existing beliefs or worldview. This can lead to skepticism, disbelief, or refusal to acknowledge the person's wisdom or authority.

Do we allow our and people's opinion of a person to determine what he or she can do or achieve? Do we realize that ordinary people around us can actually be "next door" saints through signs of holiness in their daily perseverance to raise their families, in their hard work to support them, and their attention to the sick and the elderly. Pope Francis points out that we all are called to be holy by living our lives with love and bearing witness to the joy of the Gospel in everything we do.



THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon

(Cf. Lk 12:42)

(Recited when there is no opening song.)

This is the steward, faithful and prudent, whom the Lord set over his household to give them their allowance of food at the proper time.

Greeting

(The sign of the cross is made here.)

P—The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All—And with your spirit.

Introduction

(These [or similar words] may be used to address the assembly.)

P—In today's Gospel, Jesus returns to his native Nazareth where he grew up. The people are astonished, but they belittle his humble origin. They think they know him well enough, so they cannot bring themselves to see him as a prophet or a special messenger of God. They find him too much for them. They wish to be astonished by miracles, but Jesus refuses to do for their lack of faith. Our relationship with the Lord does not rest on the spectacular, but on faith and commitment.

Penitential Act

P—Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.

(Pause)

All—I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

P—May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

All—Amen.

P—Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

P—Christ, have mercy.

All—Christ, have mercy.

P—Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

Collect

P—Let us pray. *(Pause)*

O God, who constantly raise up in your Church new examples of virtue, grant that we may follow so closely in the footsteps of the Bishop Saint Alphonsus in his zeal for souls as to attain the same rewards that are his in heaven.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

All—Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD



First Reading (Lv 23:1, 4-11, 15-16, 27, 34b-37) *(Sit)*

The Law of Moses presents the major festivals in Israel, when the people make pilgrimages to the Lord, gather in sacred assembly, offer sacrifices, and rest from their work.

A reading from the Book of the Leviticus

THE LORD said to Moses, "These are the festivals of the LORD which you shall celebrate at their proper time with a sacred assembly. The Passover of the LORD falls on the fourteenth day of the first month, at the evening twilight. The fifteenth day of this month is the LORD's feast of Unleavened Bread. For seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first of these days you shall hold a sacred assembly and do no sort of work. On each of the seven days you shall offer an oblation to the LORD. Then on the seventh day you shall again hold a sacred assembly and do no sort of work."

The LORD said to Moses, "Speak to the children of Israel and tell them: When you come into the land which I am giving you, and reap your harvest, you shall bring a sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest to the priest, who shall wave the sheaf before the LORD that it may be acceptable for you. On the day

after the sabbath the priest shall do this.

"Beginning with the day after the sabbath, the day on which you bring the wave-offering sheaf, you shall count seven full weeks, and then on the day after the seventh week, the fiftieth day, you shall present the new cereal offering to the LORD.

"The tenth of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement, when you shall hold a sacred assembly and mortify yourselves and offer an oblation to the LORD.

"The fifteenth day of this seventh month is the LORD's feast of Booths, which shall continue for seven days. On the first day there shall be a sacred assembly, and you shall do no sort of work. For seven days you shall offer an oblation to the LORD, and on the eighth day you shall again hold a sacred assembly and offer an oblation to the LORD. On that solemn closing you shall do no sort of work.

"These, therefore, are the festivals of the LORD on which you shall proclaim a sacred assembly, and offer as an oblation to the LORD burnt offerings and cereal offerings, sacrifices and libations, as prescribed for each day."

—The word of the Lord.

All—Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm (Ps 81)

R—Sing with joy to God our help.

1. Take up a melody, and sound the timbrel, the pleasant harp and the lyre. Blow the trumpet at the new moon, at the full moon, on our solemn feast. **(R)**

2. For it is a statute in Israel, an ordinance of the God of Jacob, who made it a decree for Joseph when he came forth from the land of Egypt. **(R)**

3. There shall be no strange god among you nor shall you worship any alien god. I, the LORD, am your God who led you forth from the land of Egypt. **(R)**

Alleluia (1 Pt 1:25) *(Stand)*

All—Alleluia, alleluia. The word of the Lord remains forever; this is the word that has been proclaimed to you. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel (Mt 13:54-58)

P—A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew
All—Glory to you, O Lord.

JESUS CAME to his native place and taught the people in their synagogue. They were astonished and said, "Where did this man get such wisdom and mighty deeds? Is he not the carpenter's son? Is not his mother named Mary and his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas? Are not his sisters all with us? Where did this man get all this?" And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and in his own house." And he did not work many mighty deeds there because of their lack of faith.

—The Gospel of the Lord.
All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily (*Sit*)

Prayer of the Faithful

P—The people of Nazareth, although astonished by Jesus' teaching, took offense at him because of his humble background and his ordinary trade. Let us learn from the example of Jesus who humbled himself to share our humanity in order to raise it up.

R—Lord, hear our prayer.

C—May Church leaders forsake the trappings of titles and high office to remain humble, and be great only in the eyes of God. We pray: (**R**)

C—May today's prophets persevere in renouncing injustice, corruption, and worldliness wherever these may be found. We pray: (**R**)

C—May we not prejudice anyone on account of the color of one's skin, humble appearance, or disabilities. We pray: (**R**)

C—May we listen to today's prophets and teachers who remind people of God's will in season and out of season. We pray: (**R**)

C—May we honor ordinary people who help us in our daily needs rather than the gods of money, sports, fame, and politics. We pray: (**R**)

C—Let us pray for the urgent concerns of our community and our personal intentions (*pause*). We pray: (**R**)

P—Lord God, Jesus your Son chose to be born in an ordinary family and in a small village to teach us to value simple things and humble people. Teach us to look at people's heart rather than their outside appearance. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

**LITURGY OF
THE EUCHARIST**



Presentation of the Gifts
(*Stand*)

P—Pray, brethren...

All—May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Offerings

P—Be pleased, O Lord, to enkindle our hearts with the celestial fire of your Spirit, just as you granted that Saint Alphonsus should celebrate these mysteries and by them offer himself to you as a holy sacrifice.

Through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

Preface (Holy Pastors)

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

P—Lift up your hearts.

All—We lift them up to the Lord.

P—Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All—It is right and just.

P—It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord.

For, as on the festival of Saint Alphonsus you bid your Church rejoice, so, too, you strengthen her by the example of his holy life, teach her by his words of preaching, and keep her safe in answer to his prayers.

And so, with the company of Angels and Saints, we sing the hymn of your praise as without end, we acclaim:

All—Holy, Holy, Holy... (Kneel)

Acclamation (*Stand*)

All—We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

All—Our Father...

P—Deliver us, Lord...

All—For the kingdom,...

Invitation to Peace

Invitation to Communion
(*Kneel*)

P—Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

All—Lord, I am not worthy...

Communion Antiphon
(*Cf. Lk 12:36–37*)

Blessed is that servant, whom his lord finds awake when he comes and knocks at the gate.

Prayer after Communion
(*Stand*)

P—Let us pray. (*Pause*)

O God, who gave us Saint Alphonsus to be a faithful steward and preacher of this great mystery, grant that your faithful may receive it often and, receiving it, praise you without end.

Through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

Prayer over the people

P—Bow down for the blessing. (*Pause*)

Turn the hearts of your people always to you, O Lord, we pray, and, as you give them the help of such great patron, grant also the unfailing help of your protection,

Through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

P—And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever.

All—Amen.

Dismissal

P—Go forth, the Mass is ended.

All—Thanks be to God.



PRAYER TO THE SACRED HEART *of Jesus*

Divine Jesus, you have said, "Ask, and you shall receive; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you," behold me kneeling at your feet, filled with a lively faith and confidence in the promises dictated by your Sacred Heart and pronounced by Your adorable lips. I come to ask this favor: *(Here silently mention your petitions).*

To whom can I turn if not to you whose Heart is the source of all graces and merits? Where should I seek if not in the treasure which contains all the riches of your kindness and mercy? Where should I knock if not at the door through which God gives himself to us and through which we go to God? I have recourse to You, Heart of Jesus. In you I find consolation when afflicted,

protection when persecuted, strength when burdened with trials, and light in doubt and darkness.

Dear Jesus, I firmly believe that you can grant me the grace I implore, even though it should require a miracle. You have only to will it, and my prayer will be granted. I admit that I am most unworthy of your favors, but this is not a reason for me to be discouraged. You are the God of Mercy and you will not refuse a contrite heart. Cast upon me a look of mercy, I beg of you, and your kind Heart will find in my miseries and weaknesses a reason for granting my prayers.

O Sacred Heart, whatever may be your decision with regard to my request, I will never stop adoring, loving, praising and serving you. My Lord Jesus, be pleased to accept this my act of perfect resignation to the decrees of your adorable Heart which I sincerely desire may be fulfilled by me and all your creatures forever.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, I know that there is but one thing impossible to you: to be without pity to those who are suffering or in distress. Look upon me, I beg of you, dear Jesus, and grant me the grace for which I humbly implore you through the Immaculate Heart of your most sorrowful Mother. You have entrusted me to her as her child, and her prayers are all-powerful with you. Amen.

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR SAMBUHAY DIGITAL MISSALETTE!

For inquiries and orders:

FACEBOOK: Sambuhay Missalette

GMAIL: Sambuhay@stpauls.ph

TEL: (02) 8895-9701