

Week 2: Love



Opening prayer

As we light the second candle on our Advent wreath, we rejoice in God's love for us and our love for each other. Lord, help us to share your love.

(Light the first and second candle on your Advent wreath.)

Scripture

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness. And he went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet,

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.
Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
and the crooked shall become straight,
and the rough places shall become level ways,
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’” (Luke 3:1-6)

Reflection

It was the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar's reign. Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea. Herod was tetrarch in Galilee. Annas and Caiaphas served as high priests. By placing John's preaching in this context of the political and religious leaders of the time, Luke reminds us that God breaks into our history and continues to send his messengers into the fabric of our everyday life.

Even as we eagerly anticipate our future encounter with the Lord in fullness, we are called to come together to make a straight path for the Lord today. One way we can do

this is through supporting the global Caritas International family, of which CAFOD is a part. The word Caritas is Latin for love.

Tetiana Stawnychy, President of Caritas Ukraine, said “There is something about the way the Caritas family works. It’s a community – a community of people who are supporting one another and there is a strength in that of solidarity. And you feel it both at the level in Ukraine and you also feel it with you, with our supporters from outside of Ukraine, that together we are creating this one community, this solidarity that is acting in opposite to war, in opposite to destruction and chaos.”

Preparing the way of the Lord means more than hoping for the final fulfilment of God’s promise. It means actively recognising God is at work in the world and joining in this work, participating in the creation of a better world for all people.

For discussion

- What makes you feel loved? How do you share love with others?
- John the Baptist proclaims a baptism of “repentance”, which describes a change of mind and heart. What change of mind or heart could help you walk more in God’s way of love?
- In *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis writes: “By its very nature, love calls for growth in openness and the ability to accept others as part of a continuing adventure that makes every periphery converge in a greater sense of mutual belonging. As Jesus told us: “You are all brothers” (Mt 23:8).” #95
What might this mean for us as individuals and as a community?

Closing prayer

We repent and are sorry
for the damage we have caused
to our earth and one another.
Come, Lord, bearer of love.

Guide us as we seek
to straighten the paths of injustice
and prepare a way for you.
Come, Lord, bearer of love.

Lead us in your ways,
as together we make a change
and reach out in love to others.
Come, Lord, bearer of love.

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