

ADVENT WEEK 2: MISSION



“There is so much richness in our diocese which we need to be open to encountering and receiving, such diversity but all united together in the power of the Spirit of the Risen Jesus.” Bishop Mark O’Toole

Prayer

God of hope, we cling to you, for you renew the face of the earth.
Through the gift of your Son, our Lord Jesus, we follow you on the path of dawn.
Enlightened by your love and wisdom, help us to lead each other and all creatures back to your open arms.

Amen.

Rachel McCarthy/CAFOD

Luke: 3: 1-6

In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar's reign, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea, Herod, tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip, tetrarch of the lands of Ituraea and Trachonitis, Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the pontificate of Annas as Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. He went through the whole Jordan district proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the saying of the prophet Isaiah:

‘A voice cries in the wilderness: prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight.’

Time for prayer and silent meditation

Reflection

In his letter, ‘The Joy of the Gospel’, Pope Francis wrote: I dream of a “missionary option”, that is a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church's customs, ways of doing things times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channelled for the evangelisation of today's world rather than for her self-preservation. We need to regain our missionary spirit so that the call to holiness we heard in our baptism is expressed by a change of direction.

THEMES FOR REFLECTION

In exploring the themes below participants are invited to:

- *Listen actively and without judgment to the Holy Spirit and to others*
- *Pay attention not only to the words, but also to the tone and feelings of the speaker*
- *Listen actively to yourself, mindful of your own thoughts and feelings as you speak*

1. What is our mission?

- What do I understand by mission in my own life?
- How am I called to be an active participant in the mission of the Church?
- What do I need to be more committed to the mission of the Church

2. What is the mission of our parish community?

- How does our parish support its members committed to service in society - caring for our Common Home, human rights, social justice etc?
- How does what our parish is doing relate to the Great Commission of Jesus: *“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”* (Matt 28: 18-20)
- What impact is our local parish making in the area? Do we make a difference?

3. What is the mission of the whole Church

- How are we adapting to the changing world and missionary needs in our society?

The next step will be for the facilitator/scribe to share the group's reflections with the Synodal working group. But this process doesn't end there. This listening process will become part of a longer-term shift in the way we walk together as Christians and help us grow in faith as individuals and as a Church.