

Homily Baptism of Our Lord 2025

I have seen and joyfully testified that this is the Son of God (Jn 1:34)

I used to really enjoy watching The Morecambe and Wise Show on a Saturday evening in the 70s. All good, positive family fun with an optimism which was contagious. Songs like, 'Bring Me Sunshine' had everyone singing along:

(Bring me Sunshine, in your smile,
Bring me Laughter, all the while,
In this world where we live, there should be more happiness,
So much joy you can give, to each brand new bright tomorrow.....
Bring me fun, bring me sunshine, bring me love.)

A much greater and lasting reason for optimism and joyful song in our world, is the Coming of Our Divine Saviour Jesus, The Son of God. So, let's show it on our faces, in our smiles and in our actions. How many times have I heard people say, 'I don't watch The News, as all you hear is "bad news".' Well, here is Good News of great Joy, The Saviour Born to us begins his earthly mission. Jesus today begins his healing and redemptive ministry among us, bringing us light/sunshine, bringing us love.

Isaiah in the 8th Century BC foretells this future time when there would be joy, optimism, liberation and salvation for Israel '*Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, O Sion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with joyful praise, O Jerusalem, joyfully proclaim, 'Behold, the Lord GOD comes.'* That joy-filled prophecy is completely fulfilled in the person of Jesus who tenderly comforts us in our struggles and frees us from our guilt and despair, forgiving us our sins by his Passion and Death on The Cross.

The theme of joy and optimism at the advent of The Messiah continues as The Responsorial Psalm proclaims, 'Oh Lord, My God how great you are!' You send forth your spirit, and they are recreated, and you renew the face of the earth.' With the promised Messiah a new dawn of Creation would conquer darkness. The Second Reading to Titus also encourages to welcome in joyful praise, 'the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness, and to purify for himself a people for his own possession...' What joy indeed!

In The Gospel passage from St Luke the appearance of the Godhead, three persons in One God. continues the theme of joy as The Spirit descends on Jesus like a dove and The Father exclaims '*This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, listen to him.*' Just as at Creation, Father, Son and Holy Spirit were present to dance a joyful reel of creativity (The Spirit hovered over the waters and God SAID let there be light Genesis 1-2) so NOW at the beginning of Jesus' ministry Father, Son and Spirit joyfully beckon a new dawn of Salvation, Luke writes, '...when Jesus also had been baptised and was praying, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven.

TODAY, through The Sacred Liturgy that joyful new dawn of Salvation is made present for each one of us here and now. Are we ready to seize the moment? What tender comfort, what message of beauty and indeed what joy is being gifted us. Surely, we should be dancing in the aisles.

Bring Me Sunshine

Bring me Sunshine, in your smile,

Bring me Laughter, all the while,

In this world where we live, there should be more happiness,

So much joy you can give, to each brand new bright tomorrow.

Make me happy, through the years,

Never bring me, any tears,

Let your arms be as warm as the sun from up above,

Bring me fun, bring me sunshine, bring me love.

Bring me Sunshine, in your eyes,

Bring me rainbows, from the skies,

Life's too short to be spent having anything but fun,

We can be so content, if we gather little sunbeams.

Be light-hearted, all day long,

Keep me singing, happy songs,

Let your arms be as warm as the sun from up above,

Bring me fun, bring me sunshine, bring me love.