

The Incarnate God with us through Mary's Yes
Lenten Station Mass IV
St. Andrew's Cluster, Saint James, Paisley

Dear brothers and sisters, the Preface for Lent reminds us that this is a joyful season of grace and favour, and it is certainly a joy for me to be here with you today in Saint James' Paisley for our Lent Station Mass in our Saint Andrew's Academy cluster parishes.

In this year's Station Masses we are reflecting on the Creed that we profess each time we gather for Sunday Mass so that we can understand it more deeply and proclaim it with ever more meaning and faith. This evening we are thinking a little about that part where we confess: *I believe in one LORD Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of GOD Who, by the Holy, was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.*

So, today we think simply of the great mystery of Our LORD Jesus Christ and the astonishing truth of His Incarnation. Just think of it for a moment and let the wonder of it sink in! We believe in GOD Who exists *from all eternity in unapproachable light*, the Creator of our vast Universe, almighty in power, all-knowing in wisdom. And yet we believe that this GOD came down to our world in all His fullness in Jesus, the Carpenter from Nazareth, GOD among us. Yes, we never tire of proclaiming that Jesus Christ is *GOD, from GOD, Light from Light, True GOD from True GOD.*

So, as Pope Saint John Paul proclaimed it in his first encyclical letter: *the Redeemer of men, Jesus Christ, is the centre of the universe and of history ... in this solemn moment of the world that the Church and humanity are now living. He is: The Word (Who) became flesh and dwelt among us, because GOD so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.*

He went on to say that: *this act of redemption, carried out of Calvary, marks the high point of the history of humanity in GOD's loving plan. GOD entered the history of humanity and, as a man, became an actor in that history, one of the thousands of millions of human beings but at the same time Unique! Through the Incarnation of the Son of GOD in Jesus of*

Nazareth, *GOD gave human life the dimension that He intended from the Beginning*, to become in Him sons and daughters of GOD Himself; and He has granted it so bountifully that we can even *consider the whole history of the sins of humanity, and its errors, as a happy fault... which gained us so great a Redeemer!*

Brothers and sisters, let us not take the great mystery of Jesus Christ for granted. Let us never forget how fortunate we are to be Christians and how blessed are our eyes to see Jesus and hear His voice for, as He said: *many longed to see what we see but did not see it, and to hear what we hear but did not hear it.*

And yet, have we passed on this precious faith in the mystery of Christ among us to our children? So many of our young people have been taught that Jesus is no more than a mere mortal, a good and wise model certainly, but just one of many ways to happiness and eternal life. And so they take little more than a passing note of Him as they build their own meaning for their lives. How we have sold them so short, when He is their only Way, Truth and Life, the Alpha and Omega of all their existence, their Life to the full, the Light of their World, their Good Shepherd Who pastures and protects them and Who carries them home, their Lamb of GOD Who takes away their sins and the sins of the world, their Bread of Life, their One True friend Who never fails, their LORD and their GOD!

As Moses says, it is in following Him that we become *wise and prudent*. It is in Him, and in Him alone, that we can be truly *great*. And it is only in Him that we have *GOD so near*. No wonder Moses urges us *not to forget the things our eyes have seen, nor let them slip from our heart all the days of our lives; but rather, tell them to our children and our children's children.*'

In Jesus Christ is made *complete* GOD's purpose of Creation, for the human race and for every single human person. And He made it complete through Our Lady, the Blessed Virgin Mary, in Whom He *became incarnate and was made man*. That is why we love and honour Our Blessed Mother with such devotion.

When the Angel Gabriel approached Her to reveal to Her that She was to be the Mother of GOD, She was afraid and perturbed and full of questions as we can well understand, yet

Her only desire was do GOD's will for our salvation and so She responded: *I am the handmaid of the LORD, let what you have said be done to me.* In this way She gave us and our world Jesus as *the One Who saves us from our sins.* Immediately after the Angel left Her She set off to care for Her cousin Elizabeth in her pregnancy until She was delivered of her son, and in this way Mary showed Her true personality as One Who wants to help us. She was prepared to put up with the hardship of Bethlehem, with exile as a refugee and asylum seekers in Egypt, with the routine of daily life in Nazareth, with worries that every mother knows as Her Son began find His wings, with supporting Him in His adult vocation all the way to the Cross and with the sword that would pierced Her own soul.

At the foot of the Cross Jesus knew He had one last piece to put in place before His mission was complete. Turning to His beloved disciple, and so to us, He said: *This is Your Mother,* and then to His Mother: *Behold your son.* Only then could He breathe His last.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of GOD Who, by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. There are perhaps other ways we might imagine that GOD could have saved us, but we cannot think of one more perfect than bringing us Our LORD Jesus Christ as Our Saviour and Redeemer, and His Precious Mother as Our Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary

May we keep these truths and teach them to be *considered great in the kingdom of Heaven.*

First reading

Moses said to the people: 'Now, Israel, take notice of the laws and **customs** that I teach you today, and **observe them, that you may have life** and may enter and take possession of the land that the Lord the God of your fathers is giving you. 'See, as the Lord my God has commanded me, I teach you the laws and customs that you are to observe in the land you are to enter and make your own. Keep them, observe them, and they will demonstrate to the peoples your wisdom and understanding. When they come to know of all these laws they will exclaim, "No other people is as **wise and prudent** as this great nation." And indeed, what great nation is there that **has its gods so near as the Lord** our God is to us whenever we call to him? And what great nation is there that has laws and customs to match this whole Law that I put before you today? 'But take care what you do and be on your guard. **Do not forget** the things your eyes have seen, nor let them slip from your heart all the days of your life; rather, **tell them to your children** and to your children's children.'

Gospel**Matthew 5:17-19**

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Do not imagine that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I have come not to abolish but **to complete them**. I tell you solemnly, till heaven and earth disappear, not one dot, not one little stroke, shall disappear from the Law until its purpose is achieved. Therefore, the man who infringes even one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be considered the least in the kingdom of heaven; but the man who keeps them and teaches them will be considered **great in the kingdom of heaven.**'