

A Coffee with Alessio



Welcome to 2020!

Happy New Year to you all and welcome to the coffee column for 2020. I hope your Christmas music and celebrations helped you and those in your faith community to celebrate with great joy the birth of the Lord! I also hope you had some downtime over the Christmas break and an opportunity to have some "me-time". I had the opportunity to work with some very talented musicians over the Christmas season who helped me and others pray in thanksgiving for the gift of God's Son coming down to live among us on the first Christmas. Speaking of Christmas, last Sunday we celebrated the feast of the Presentation of the Lord, which commemorates the prescribed Mosaic ritual following the birth of a child, and the encounter of Jesus with Simeon and Anna. In the pre-Vatican II liturgy, this feast actually marked the end of the Christmas Season. In fact, the outdoor crib and Christmas tree remain in Saint Peter's Square until the feast of the Presentation of the Lord. Imagine that, a longer Christmas Season. I'll say a bit more about this feast later in the column.

It only seems like yesterday we were finishing the 2019 school year and getting ready for Christmas. In fact, school finished right on Christmas and there wasn't much time to catch one's breath and then we were celebrating Christmas and New Year. That all said, January has been and gone! Everything has started up again and soon we will be getting ready for Lent. Yes, Lent will be here on 26 February with the feast of Ash Wednesday.

In the First Reading this Sunday, we hear "share your bread with the hungry", and in the Gospel Jesus says: "You are the salt of the earth". I am a huge fan of chips, and I'm very fussy when it comes to fried potato chips. Chips without salt are absolutely tasteless and for that's the point Jesus is making in the Gospel reading this Sunday when he says: "if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned". Chips need to be hot and have salt on them. So it is with us. We must be on fire in our faith, and not lukewarm or cold. In that way, we can fulfill the response to the Psalm this Sunday: "A light rises in the darkness for the upright". Back to the Presentation of the Lord. Last Sunday, candles were blessed before Mass. Those candles serve as a reminder to us, that we must carry let Christ shine in us and in all that we do, so that we can be a faithful witness to him in the world.

Three music suggestions for this Sunday:

- Church of God
 - CWB #652
 - CWBII #471
 - GA #480

- Out of darkness
 - AOV1 #134
 - GA #504

- We are called (*Come live in the light*)
 - AOV2 #60
 - CWBII #476
 - GA #514

I'll write more about our music workshops in the coming weeks. Just to give you the heads up though, on Thursday next week (13 February) we will have our Holy Week music workshop at Saint Lawrence Church, Balcatta and there is also the Music Reading Course which will be held at the Centre for Liturgy beginning on Wednesday 19 February.

May the year ahead be filled with many blessings for us all, give us opportunities to be faithful witnesses to the Lord and all times remain faithful to what the Church asks us to do in our preparation and enactment of the liturgy so that we model one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, as we serve Him joyfully making a fruitful harvest in His vineyard!

One comment before I go. Thursday 6 February was the 68th Anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II accession to the throne. We should pray for her, her representatives and all parliamentarians in this country, that they continue to remember to serve the interests of the people they elected and that they have a duty to serve and not be served.

Now as for a coffee this week. Well, I mentioned chips and I was at The Old Laundry in Angove Street with a friend a couple of weeks ago. Their chips are absolutely delightful. So, a bowl of chips there and a flat-white will work a treat for you!

Till next week enjoy your coffee (and chips)!

Mr Alessio Loiacono
Music Field Officer

Friday 7 February 2020