

# Sunday 4th (B) of Lent

**Gospel text (Jn 3,14-21): Jesus said to Nicodemus: “Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.” For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.**

**And this is the verdict, that the light came into the world, but people preferred darkness to light, because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come toward the light, so that his works might not be exposed. But whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God.**

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***«God so loved the world that he gave his only Son»***

+ Fr. Joan Ant. MATEO i García  
*(Tremp, Lleida, Spain)*

Today, the liturgy offers us an advanced fragrance of true Pascal joy. The ornaments of the Celebrant are pink. It is “laetare” Sunday inviting us to a serene joy. “Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all you that love her...” says the antiphon of the introit sung today.

God wants us to be happy. The most elementary psychology tells us that a person who does not enjoy life ends up sick, both in body and spirit. However, our joy must be well founded; it must be the expression of serenity given by a full meaningful

life. Otherwise, it would degenerate into superficiality and silliness. St. Teresa, most accurately, distinguished between “holy joy” and a “foolish joy”. The latter is only external; it lasts very little and leaves a bitter aftertaste.

Our life of faith is going through difficult times. But they are also thrilling times. To a certain extent, we may experience the Babylon exile sung by the psalm. Yes, we can also live an exile experience “weeping when we remembered Zion” (Ps 137:1). Our external problems and, most of all, our sins, may take us by the rivers of Babylon. However, there still is room for hope and God keeps telling us: “May my tongue stick to my palate if I do not remember you...” (Ps 137:6).

We can always rejoice for God loves us so much that He “gave us his only Son” (Jn 3:16). Soon enough we shall join this only Son in his walk to death and resurrection. We shall contemplate the love of He who loves us so much as to die for us, for you and me. And we shall fill our heart with love and “will look upon him whom they have pierced” (cf. Jn 19:37), and, inside us, there will grow such a great joy that nobody will be able to remove it from us.

The true joy that enlightens our life does not come from our own effort. St. Paul reminds us that: thanks may be given by many on our behalf for the gift granted us (Eph 2:8). Let God loves us and let us love Him, and our joy will be greater next Easter and all our life, too. And let us not forget to let God come closer to be regenerated by Him through a good confession before Easter.