

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER DANAHA
(JANUARY 21ST 2007)

Dearly beloved:

In today's Gospel, we have three scenes given us in the life of Nicodemus. The first is his interview with Christ. Nicodemus was a Pharisee, and a prominent member of the Jewish ruling council. He was a leader of the Jews, a teacher of Israel and a member of the religious party opposed to the teaching of Jesus. In fact, in John 12, the summary statement says that it was Nicodemus' own group, the Pharisees, which intimidated the authorities against confessing Jesus.

Nicodemus recognized Jesus Christ as the Messiah. He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God". In reply, Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth; no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again. Jesus does not directly answer his question. Instead, he engages him in an unrelated topic of conversation. How can a man be born again when he is old? Nicodemus asked. Jesus answered, I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the spirit. Flesh given birth to flesh, but the spirit given birth to spirit. He was the recipient of Jesus' born again teaching, one of the most famous and widely quoted versus of the bible – "for God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life", was spoken by Jesus Christ to Nicodemus.

In the second scene, we can see Nicodemus going about his ordinary business, for a man does not need to leave his work to follow Christ and in the third scene we find Nicodemus at the Cross. He came out of his hiding place. Compare his first coming to Christ with this his last. He was full of fear at the first time, now bold and courageous, a true believer.

"Lord Jesus Christ, you offer us a new birth in the Holy Spirit. Help us to draw near to you and to believe in your life-giving word. May Your kingdom come and may your will be done in our life today, tomorrow and always".

Please read the following Bible verses, in preparation for this Sunday's commemoration.

Bible readings for Sunday, January 21st 2007.
(Third Sunday After the Baptism of Our Lord)

Before Holy Qurbana:

II Kings	-	2: 19-22
Joel	-	2: 21-32
Jeremiah	-	31: 1-12

Holy Qurbana:

General Epistles:	Acts	-	17: 16-34
Epistles of St. Paul:	I Corinthians	-	3: 16 – 4: 5
Holy Gospel:	St. John	-	3: 1-12

With prayers,
Thomas Alex