



THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE

Daily Devotion at Zion + December 5, 2021 AD + [Advent Season](#)

Being Truly Human Part Two: Unashamed

“And they felt no shame” (Genesis 2:25).

Have you every felt shame—and if so, when was it? Here is one abiding trouble in the human experience: we often feel shame for things that are not shameful (like eating another piece of cake) but no shame for things that are (such as greed, lust, and false worship). Shame is a common experience, and yet mankind, in its sin, even gets shame all mixed up.

Does God care? He does.

God created human beings to experience true liberty, free of shame in relation to Him, each other, and their own conscience. People abandon this goal for as long as they 1) embrace shameful things that alienate them from God and His creation, and 2) feel shameful for all the wrong reasons. So, in His mercy, Jesus came to restore us to a wholly unashamed life. He bore our shame on the cross so that we might be clothed with His honor.

The forgiveness of sins shared in the life of the Church is a foretaste of that glorious honor. How shall you rest in it this Advent? Read on to learn more!

About the Cover Art

Leonardo DaVinci, when he painted “Madonna of the Yarnwinder,” is not actually suggesting that this scene took place in history. He’s aiming for something deeper. The Virgin Mary (“Madonna,” or “my lady”) holds her son, Jesus, who turns away from her to play with a yarnwinder, used in the task of weaving. It so happens that the yarnwinder’s cross shape points ahead to that Infant’s future suffering and death at Calvary. Thus DaVinci teaches us by his painting the true purpose and mission of Jesus. He fulfills His humanity—and ours—by bearing the shame of the cross, which would take Him from His mother’s arms and yet put Him in our arms, and us in His.

The Second Joy of Being Human

“Everyone who believes in Him will not be put to shame”
(Romans 10:11, quoting Isaiah 45:17).

Christ let Himself be stripped and mocked (Matthew 27:28-31) so that we might be clothed with honor, the “garments of salvation” (Isaiah 61:10). But how do we put on these clothes daily? How does the promise of honor in Christ shape our daily faith and devotion?

Here is the second joy of being human: repentance, which begins with honesty about ourselves. People often think of repentance in a negative way, something they don’t wish to do (it’s hard to be wrong!). Yet consider the promise that repentance brings: the possibility of change and a restored love and favor.

It all begins with the freedom to be honest about ourselves, confessing our sins without fear or shame. Turn to page 4 for more!

Daily Readings for the Week of Advent 2 (December 5)

S Amos 6:1-14
2 Thessalonians 1:5-12
Luke 1:57-68

Th Amos 9:1-10
Revelation 2:8-17
Matthew 23:13-26

M Amos 7:1-9
Revelation 1:1-8
Matthew 22:23-33

F Haggai 1:1-15
Revelation 2:18-29
Matthew 23:27-39

T Amos 7:10-17
Revelation 1:9-16
Matthew 22:34-46

Sa Haggai 2:1-9
Revelation 3:1-6
Matthew 24:1-14

W Amos 8:1-14
Revelation 1:17—2:7
Matthew 23:1-12

*These readings correspond
to pages 38-70 in Volume
III of For All the Saints.*

*The Shameful Cross
and the Shameless Church*

What honesty Christ makes possible!

We see it happen on the cross. Christ bears all our sin: our hatred and rejection of God, our bloodthirstiness, our hatred of our fellow man and ignorance of the truth. His cross thereby *publicizes* our sin—there’s no hiding it now!—and yet, just for that reason, His cross actually frees us. It frees us to be honest.

Since Christ publicly displayed our shame, only to rise from the dead with a word of peace for us poor sinners, there’s no reason to hide our sin from Him. He clearly knows it already—He felt it in His bones!—and even more, He has announced that this shame cannot separate us from Him. He keeps us with Himself, and therefore, within God’s grace and favor.

That grace opens to us a shameless life in which we may boldly stand before God, and even before our neighbors, and speak our sin and shame truthfully. The cross and its gracious Lord free us for this honesty, an honesty that leads us to confess not only our sin but also our faith.

So goes the life of repentance. It is not an oppressive life, burdened with guilt, but a liberating one, marked by the expectation of forgiveness. As we repent, we are confessing our trust in the Lord’s mercy. We are saying, “Who I am now is not who I will always be.” In Christ, we are a new creation!

So just as the Christian life is marked by a robust thanksgiving (explained in the last *Shepherd’s Voice*), so also is it marked by repentance. Christians happily lay down the burden of having to be right. We will tell God, and our neighbors, just how wrong we are, because it’s in being wrong that we discover God, who makes us more than “right”: He makes us righteous.