

CHRISTMAS DAY AT HOME



THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD Friday 25th December 2020

If you are housebound or self-isolating at this time, please use these prayers to unite yourself with the worship of the Universal Church, and your own Parish this Christmas Day. If alone, read or say these prayers quietly to yourself. If with another, or in a family, someone should read the “leader” parts, and others respond. It might be suitable to find a special, quiet place at home for your Christmas Day prayers.

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon

A: Let us all rejoice in the Lord, for our Saviour has been born in the world. Today true peace has come down to us from heaven.

Sign of the Cross

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

A: Amen.

Introduction

L: Happy Christmas! After our weeks of preparation, we finally arrive at this day of profound joy: for today a Saviour is born for us, he is Christ the Lord! This is the Feast of Emmanuel – God with us. Wherever we are, and whatever our condition, whether we are glad and rejoicing, struggling or suffering, sad or lonely, Jesus is Emmanuel – God with us! This is the feast of God’s love, God’s closeness, God’s sharing in our humanity. Welcome him. Let him in to your home and your heart. Greet him with song like the angels, asking for mercy and praising his glory, saying:

Gloria

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the

world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Opening Prayer

L: Let us pray.

Grant, we pray, almighty God, that, as we are bathed in the new radiance of your incarnate Word, the light of faith, which illumines our minds, may also shine through in our deeds. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

A: Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Gospel Reading

Luke 2:1-14

Caesar Augustus issued a decree for a census of the whole world to be taken. This census – the first – took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria, and everyone went to his own town to be registered. So Joseph set out from the town of Nazareth in Galilee and travelled up to Judaea, to the town of David called Bethlehem, since he was of David’s House and line, in order to be registered together with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to a son, her first born. She

wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger because there was no room for them at the inn. In the countryside close by there were shepherds who lived in the fields and took it in turns to watch their flocks during the night. The angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone round them. They were terrified, but the angel said, ‘Do not be afraid. Listen, I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared by the whole people. Today in the town of David a saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. And here is a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.’ And suddenly with the angel there was a great throng of the heavenly host, praising God and singing: ‘Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace to men who enjoy his favour.’

The Gospel of the Lord.

A: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Reflection

This day simply spend a few moments reflecting on this familiar story, perhaps looking at a manger scene and imagining what it meant to those present – Mary, Joseph, shepherds and angels.

If gathering as a family, perhaps now continue to discuss what this Gospel passage means to you. If alone, think about what key message you take from the Scriptures today.

Profession of Faith

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

[Optional: Prayer at the Manger Scene

If you have a crib or manger scene at home, this would be the point to place the image of the baby Jesus in it, and say the following prayer:

L: While all the world, Lord God, lay wrapped in deepest silence, and night had reached its midpoint, your all-powerful Word came down. As year by year the beauty of this day/night returns, growing old with the aged and renewed in the wonder of children, so may we, grown old in sin but reborn to grace, contemplate the mysteries of your grace in this holy scene. Bless all who look upon this manger; may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus, and raise our thoughts to him, who is God-with-us and Saviour of all, and who lives and reigns forever and ever.

A: Amen.]

Intercessions

L: A holy day has dawned upon us! With wonder and spiritual joy, let us bring to the Lord our needs.

L: For our holy Father Pope Francis, for all the bishops and priests who serve God's people throughout the world. Lord, in your mercy:

A: Hear our prayer.

L: For peace on earth, that the song of the angels may inspire those who govern nations and guide armies to seek peaceful resolutions to conflicts. Lord, in your mercy:

A: Hear our prayer.

L: For the sick and housebound, and for anyone who is alone or homeless this Christmas Day. Lord, in your mercy:

A: Hear our prayer.

L: For the poor and those who struggle to provide the basic needs for

their families, that they may be surrounded by people who will offer the same care they would offer the Holy Family. Lord in your mercy:

A: Hear our prayer.

L: For those who this day feel the absence of a loved one who has died, that they may be comforted by Christ's birth. Lord, in your mercy:

A: Hear our prayer.

Please add your own prayers for the needs of the Church, the world and your local community. You may wish to add particular prayers for family members, friends or neighbours in need at this time.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

L: At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

A: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

L: May the oblation of this day's feast be pleasing to you, O Lord, we pray, that through this most holy exchange we may be found in the likeness of Christ, in whom our nature is united to you. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

A: Amen.

Before Spiritual Communion

L: In the mystery of the Word made flesh a new light of your glory has shone upon the eyes of our mind, so that, as we recognize in him God made visible, we may be caught up through him in love of things invisible. At the Last Supper he showed the fullness of your love, as he gave his Body and Blood for his people. Even though we are not in Church, and not able to receive communion today, we open our minds and hearts now to your generous love and the gift of Jesus your Son, welcoming him spiritually into our lives.

Spiritual Communion

A: My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Holy Sacrament of the altar. I love you above all things and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you

sacramentally, come spiritually into my soul so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and forever. Amen.

Pause for a moment of silent prayer and reflection.

Thanksgiving Psalm

L: Today a saviour has been born to us: he is Christ the Lord.

A: Today a saviour has been born to us: he is Christ the Lord.

L: O sing a new song to the Lord, sing to the Lord all the earth. O sing to the Lord, bless his name.

A: Today a saviour has been born to us: he is Christ the Lord.

L: Proclaim his help day by day, tell among the nations his glory and his wonders among all the peoples.

A: Today a saviour has been born to us: he is Christ the Lord.

L: Let the heavens rejoice and earth be glad, let the sea and all within it thunder praise, let the land and all it bears rejoice, all the trees of the wood shout for joy at the presence of the Lord for he comes, he comes to rule the earth.

A: Today a saviour has been born to us: he is Christ the Lord.

L: With justice he will rule the world, he will judge the peoples with his truth.

A: Today a saviour has been born to us: he is Christ the Lord.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

Final Prayer and Blessing

L: Let us pray.

Grant us, we pray, O Lord our God, that we, who are gladdened by participation in the feast of our Redeemer's Nativity, may through an honourable way of life become worthy of union with him. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

A: Amen.

L: May the Lord ✠ bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

A: Amen.

L: Let us bless the Lord!

A: Thanks be to God!