



December 26th, 2021 - First Sunday of Christmas

What Child is This?

What Child is this who, laid to rest
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom Angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard and Angels sing;
Haste, haste, to bring Him laud,
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

Why lies He in such mean estate,
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.

Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,
The cross be borne for me, for you.
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

So bring Him incense, gold and myrrh,
Come peasant, king to own Him;
The King of kings salvation brings,
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise a song on high,
The Virgin sings her lullaby.
Joy, joy for Christ is born,
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

Welcome

Opening Acclamation

Leader: For unto us a child is born **People:** *Unto us a son is given.*

Collect for Purity

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Summary of the Law

Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ says: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.

Gloria in Excelsis

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth. Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer. 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.**

The Collect of the Day

Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, kindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Angels We Have Heard On High

Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o'er the plains
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heavenly song?

Gloria, in excelsis Deo (x2)

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing

Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King

Please be seated for a reading from the Revelation to John [12:1-10]

And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pains and the agony of giving birth. And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it. She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne, and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished for 1,260 days. Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world--he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.

Leader: The Word of the Lord. **People:** *Thanks be to God.*

Please be seated for a reading from the Acts of the Apostles [7:51-60]

[And Stephen said,] "You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered, you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it." Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him. But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. And he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together at him. Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Leader: The Word of the Lord. **People:** *Thanks be to God.*

Please stand for The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to St. John [21:20-25]

People: *Glory to you, Lord Christ.*

Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who had been reclining at table close to him and had said, "Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?" When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, "Lord, what about this man?" Jesus said to him, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!" So the saying spread abroad among the brothers that this disciple was not to die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?" This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true. Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

Leader: The Gospel of the Lord. **People:** *Praise to you, Lord Christ!*

Sermon: Stephen, John and the Holy Innocents: Witnesses to Christ

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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 the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Leader: Let us pray for the Church and for the world, saying, “hear our prayer.” [Add particular petitions silently or aloud before “Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.”]

For the peace of the whole world, and for the well-being and unity of the people of God.

Lord, in your mercy, *hear our prayer.*

For Foley, our Archbishop, and Martyn, our Bishop, and for all the clergy and people of our Diocese and Congregation.

Lord, in your mercy, *hear our prayer.*

For all those who proclaim the Gospel at home and abroad; and for all who teach and disciple others.

Lord, in your mercy, *hear our prayer.*

For our brothers and sisters in Christ who are persecuted for their faith.

Lord, in your mercy, *hear our prayer.*

For our nation, for those in authority, and for all in public service,

Lord, in your mercy, *hear our prayer.*

For all those who are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity,

Lord, in your mercy, *hear our prayer.*

We give thanks to you for all your goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all whom you have made.

Lord, in your mercy, *hear our prayer.*

Leader: Heavenly Father, grant these our prayers for the sake of Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Advocate, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Join me in praying this prayer for our pastor search:

Almighty God, giver of every good gift: Look graciously on your Church, and so guide the minds of those who shall choose a Rector for this congregation that we may receive a faithful pastor who will preach the Gospel, care for your people, equip us for ministry, and lead us forth in fulfillment of the Great Commission, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Confession and Absolution

Most merciful God we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways to the glory of your name; through Christ our Lord.

(Standing) Passing of the Peace

(Seated) Announcements

(Standing) The Doxology

(Standing) THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: *And with your spirit.*

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: *We lift them up to the Lord.*

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: *It is right to give him thanks and praise.*

Leader: It is right to praise you, Father, Lord of all creation; in your love you made us for yourself. When we turned away, you did not reject us, but came to meet us in your Son.

People: *You embraced us as your children and welcomed us to sit and eat with you.*

Leader: In Christ you shared our life that we might live in him and he in us.

People: *He opened his arms of love upon the cross and made for all the perfect sacrifice for sin.*

Leader: On the night he was betrayed, at supper with his friends, he took bread, and gave you thanks; he broke it and gave it to them, saying: Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.

People: *Father, we do this in remembrance of him; his body is the bread of life.*

Leader: At the end of supper, taking the cup of wine, he gave you thanks, and said: Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins; do this in remembrance of me.

People: *Father, we do this in remembrance of him: his blood is shed for all.*

Leader: As we proclaim his death and celebrate his rising in glory, send your Holy Spirit that this bread and this wine may be to us the body and blood of your dear Son.

People: *As we eat and drink these holy gifts make us one in Christ, our risen Lord.*

Leader: With your whole Church throughout the world we offer you this sacrifice of praise and lift our voice to join the eternal song of heaven: *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

O Come, All You Unfaithful

O come all you unfaithful
Come weak and unstable
Come know you are not alone
O come barren and waiting ones
Weary of praying
Come see what your God has done

*Christ is born, Christ is born
Christ is born for you*

O come bitter and broken
Come with fears unspoken
Come taste of His perfect love

O come guilty and hiding ones
There is no need to run
See what your God has done

He's the Lamb who was given
Slain for our pardon
His promise is peace for those who believe
[repeat]

So come though you have nothing
Come He is the offering
Come see what your God has done

Go Tell It On the Mountain

*Go, tell it on the mountain
Over the hills and everywhere
Go, tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born*

While shepherds kept their watching
O'er silent flocks by night
Behold throughout the heavens
There shone a Holy light

The shepherds feared and trembled
When, lo! Above the Earth
Rang out the angel chorus
That hailed our Savior's birth

Down in a lowly manger
Our humble Christ was born
And God sent us salvation
That blessed Christmas morn

The Blessing

All of our problems: *We send to the cross of Christ* All of our difficulties: *We send to the cross of Christ*
All of the devil's works: *We send to the cross of Christ* And all of our hopes: *We set on the risen Lord!*

Leader: The Lord bless us and keep us. The Lord make his face to shine upon us. The Lord lift up his countenance upon us and give us peace. And the blessing of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore.

Leader: Let us bless the Lord. **People:** *Thanks be to God!*