



CHRISTMAS
25 December 2020
Liturgy and Bulletin



OPENING PRAYER

*Father,
you make this holy night radiant
with the splendour of Jesus Christ our light.
We welcome him as Lord, the true light of the world.
Amen.*

FIRST READING: A reading from Isaiah

For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the greatness of his government and peace
there will be no end.
He will reign on David's throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the Lord Almighty
will accomplish this.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM:

Response: Today is born our Saviour, Christ the Lord.

Sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord, all the earth.
Sing to the Lord, praise his name. (R)

Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad;
let the sea resound, and all that is in it.
Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them;
let all the trees of the forest sing for joy.
Let all creation rejoice before the Lord, for he comes,
he comes to judge the earth. (R)

He will judge the world in righteousness
and the peoples in his faithfulness. (R)

SECOND READING: A reading from the letter to Titus

For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present

age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

Good News and great joy to all the world:

Today is born our Saviour, Christ the Lord.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria. And everyone went to their own town to register.

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests.”

A Reflection on Luke 2:1-14

“There was no room for them in the inn.”

The accommodation for the birth of Jesus was an important matter for Luke. In fact, it may be the major point of his account. He was not trying to make the story more poignant or sentimental. He has a theological point to make.

An inn is a place for travellers, for people passing through. They do not plan to stay long, just long enough to get some rest, conduct some business and move on. The fact that there is no place for Jesus in the inn refers to a verse in the Book of Jeremiah: “O hope of Israel, its saviour in time of trouble, why should you be like a stranger in the land, like a traveller turning aside for the night?” It is a prayer that God will stay with the people of Israel, that divine care be present for them in time of need.

Jesus is not born in an inn because he is not “a stranger in the land.....a traveller turning aside for the night.” He really is Emmanuel, “God With Us.” By saying that “there was no place for them in the inn,” Luke is not talking about overworked hotel staff. There was no place for them in the inn because an inn is not an appropriate place for the birth of Jesus. He is not passing through. He has come among us to remain with us. He is not a travelling stranger, but a native of our world, and he will not move on. He’s here to stay.

For Luke, the key detail of the account of Jesus’ birth is the manger. He mentions it three times. It is the detail that guarantees the message of the angels to the shepherds. “This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth.....and lying in a manger.” It is important because it tells why this “God With Us” is with us.

Isaiah talks of how the people of Israel have turned away from God: “The ox knows its owner and the donkey knows its manger; but Israel does not know, my people do not understand.” Luke is telling us three times that the time has come to know God. No matter that we may be as dense as an ox or as stubborn as

a donkey, we can now know God because in Jesus, God is as really present as hay in a barn. That's why we put an ox and a donkey in our Christmas cribs.

What is usually in a manger? Food. Jesus is found in the manger because he is nourishment and strength, "good news of great joy to all the people."

And who are these people? The first announcement of the birth is to the shepherds. Shepherds in Israel two thousand years ago had a reputation for being thieves, wandering the wilderness with their sheep, and attacking unwary travellers they happened upon in their wanderings. They had reason to be afraid when "the angel of the Lord stood before them."

The first people to hear that God is now with us and will never leave us, the first to hear that in Christ, God is clearly present as one who will give us life, is a group that most needs that kind of good news. Christ has come for sinners. In other words Christ has come for me, for you and for all the world.

Jesus will not stay at an inn, but in the manger. He will always be among us and always sustain us sinners. Christmas is not just about a baby born long ago. It is about Jesus Christ, the Risen Saviour who is with us today to be "good news to all the people."

Fr William J. Grimm

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Reader: That the holy child of Bethlehem will draw us out of darkness, and into the light of God.

(pause) In your glory: **All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: That those separated from loved ones this Christmas will find assurance in the love of God's family. (pause) In your glory:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That as our community celebrates the birth of our Saviour, we will bring about peace on earth and good will for all. (pause) In your glory:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That through the Virgin's Son, the sick will be given renewed life, especially Tony Riley, Don Raper, Rupert Ermert, Ann McDougall, Val Biggers, Celia Roach, and Mark Sissian. (pause) In your glory:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That those who have died may ever share in the eternal light of Christ, especially Tom Richardson, Frank Stephens, Bob Bradley, Harold & Ena Bradley, Kevin & Zita Hart, Moya O'Connell, Rita & Jack O'Connell, Ray & Eileen Reeson, Laurie Reeson, Gwen Reeson and our own deceased relatives and friends. (pause) In your glory:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

God our Father,

we rejoice in the birth of our Saviour.

May we share his life completely

by living as he has taught.

Amen.

Hello St Bede's Parishioners,

Mass last Saturday evening was attended by 46 parishioners. Social distancing, hygiene requirements and recording attendance procedures are still being observed. **Please try to arrive in good time** as all these regulations and requirements will take time. The protocols are being slowly relaxed, singing is now allowed and distancing is now 2 square metres inside the church.

Weekday Masses: No weekday Masses until further notice.

Meditation: Thursdays at 10.30am in the Presbytery.

Adoration: in recess until end of January 2021

Social Justice Group: meets in the Church Sunday 7th February 2021 at 10.30am.

Christmas Masses: 24 December: 5pm Family Mass; 7pm Night Mass. Bookings will be either online at <https://www.trybooking.com/BMYAJ> or phone/text Helen on 0430169849. Bookings for Family Mass will be in Families; 7pm to be booked as individuals. Bookings open 1 December and **close 23 December**. Please let any family coming home for Christmas know that they (or you) **must book to be sure of a place** at their Mass of choice. We might not like them but the restrictions are there to keep us safe.

Araluen Stations of the Cross: 3.00pm First Friday of every month, commencing 4 December. All welcome.

Father Dermid McDermott will be our supply priest from January 2 until 31 March 2021. We will then welcome Father Mick Burke just in time for Easter.

Brother Brian will be taking his annual leave from January 10 to February 5.

No liturgies or bulletins during January, unless something important crops up. I, too, will be having a break of sorts during January. Helen

The Archbishop's Christmas Appeal for 2020 is conducted at all Christmas Masses throughout the Archdiocese.

We will once again use our collection bags for the Christmas Masses. If our collectors could speak to Br Brian re procedure before the Masses, it would be much appreciated. We will need 2 collectors for each Mass (3 if the gallery is occupied)

Next week's Readings:

Christmas: 1st: Isaiah 9:1-7. 2nd: Titus 2:11-14. Gospel: Luke 2:1-14.

Holy Family: 1st Gen. 15:1-6,21:1-3. 2nd: Hebrews 11:8,11-12,17-19. Gospel: Luke 2:22-40.

Ministry Rosters for Restrictive Masses

Date	Acolyte	Welcomer	Readers	PowerPoint
24 Dec 5pm	Felix	Cathy F	Wendy H/Germaine	Helen H
24 Dec 7pm	James	Geraldine	Rod/Miah	Geoff Pollard
26 Dec	Geoff	Helen P	Helen B/Germaine	Helen H
2 Jan	Felix	Cathy F	Wendy M-B/Ann	Helen H
9 Jan	James	Geraldine	Wendy H/Germaine	Helen H
16 Jan	Geoff	Helen P	Rod/Bobbie	Helen H
23 Jan	Felix	Cathy F	Helen B/Michael	Helen H
30 Jan	James	Geraldine	Wendy M-B/Ann	Helen H

Please let me know as soon as possible if you won't be attending, **especially the Christmas Masses** so other arrangements can be made.

COVID-19 Links for information: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19>

Mass Online Link: <https://catholicvoice.org.au/mass-online>

Masks are not mandatory but recommended. Please feel free to wear one to Mass if you wish.

I wish you all a happy and blessed Christmas and a safe and healthy New Year,
Helen Hart