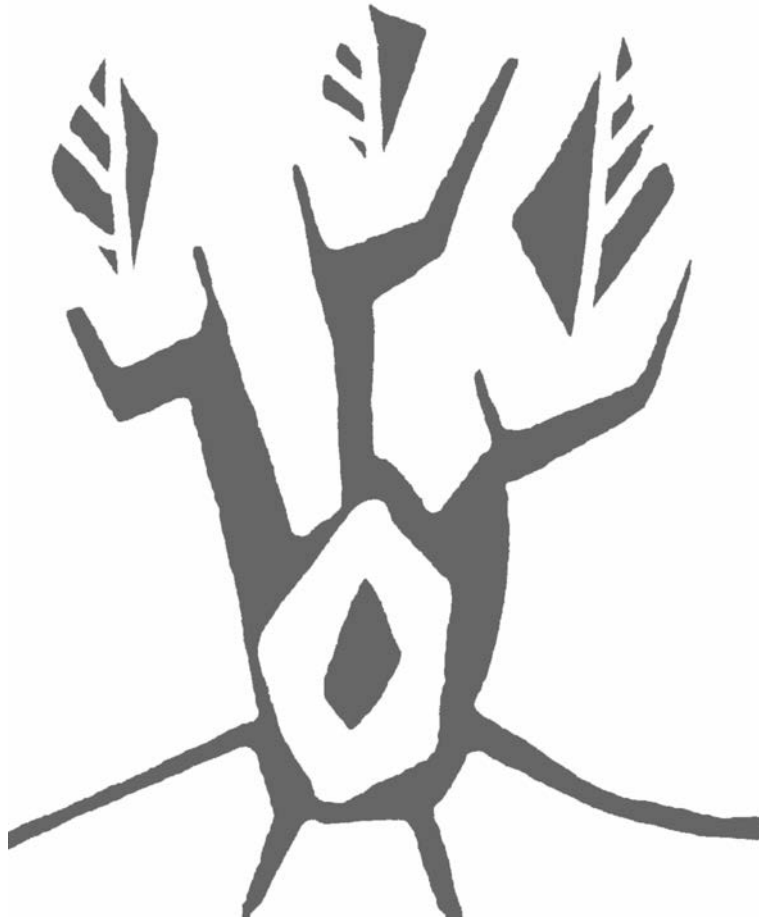




# Pastoral Liturgy

Formation and Resources for Lectionary-Based Worship



## **Advent-Christmastide-Ordinary Time**

December 2019 – February 2020

**Year A**

Vol 50, 1

Founding Editor – **Russell Hardiman**

Editors – **Angela McCarthy, Vincent Glynn**

Associate Editors – **Peta Wellstead**

# Pastoral Liturgy

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## From the Editor

Dr Angela McCarthy



Editor: Dr Angela McCarthy



Editor: Fr Vincent Glynn

As we begin a new liturgical year, we are introducing some changes to Pastoral Liturgy. For this edition we have Peta Wellstead as Associate Editor. Peta was an associate of Fr Russell Hardiman for many years and was responsible for the ordering of his extraordinarily large library which has now been incorporated into St Teresa's Library at The University of Notre Dame Australia, Fremantle Campus. She was also his editorial assistant for the large and comprehensive publication of *From East to West You Gather a People*, and has been part of the Pastoral Liturgy story for many years.

Our Editorial Board has also been reviewed. We have said farewell to Fr Eugene Trainor and Fr Tom Ryan who have been very long serving members of the peer review system. We also farewell Fr Peter Black who has been a stalwart since this journal became part of the School of Philosophy and Theology at Notre Dame. Thank you, Peter, for all your work and support since 2014.

Our new members of the Editorial Board are Chris Kan, Michael Mangan, Joe Tedesco and Mary-Anne Lumley. Chris has just completed his Masters of Philosophy at Notre Dame and he explored the liturgical change from Latin to the vernacular following the Second Vatican Council through the experience of the Benedictine Community of New Norcia. It is a very interesting study which he hopes to publish soon. He is Campus Minister at Sacred Heart College, Sorrento WA.

Michael Mangan is well known to our readers as he provides music selections from his own music in each of our issues. He brings to the board a strong parish liturgical background, particularly in children's music.

Joe Tedesco has completed his Masters of Theology through Notre Dame in Fremantle and he is currently a contributor for the reflections in this journal which many of you have enjoyed and used.

Mary-Anne Lumley is the College Liturgist for John XXIII College in Mt Claremont WA. She brings a wealth of liturgical experience and has also completed her Masters at Notre Dame Fremantle.

We welcome them all and thank them for their willingness to share the load and keep Pastoral Liturgy as a valuable resource.

Fr Tom O'Loughlin has contributed an article to this volume. He is Professor of Historical Theology in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies in the University of Nottingham in the UK. His excellent article gives us an insight into the development of the Prayer of the Faithful which I found particularly interesting. In the beginning of the Vatican II changes there were many new things to learn – as those of us old enough to remember will attest! We are still learning and developing our understanding of the changes and this article is very helpful.

Fiona Dyball has provided for us further insights into liturgical music for young people. She comes from a strong background in liturgical education with youth and her comments are very worthwhile. There are a number of web links at the end of her article and they are well worth exploring.

At present we are moving through the period of listening and discernment for the Plenary Council. Many people are busy writing documents to be considered at the first large gathering next year. The material that has been submitted has been divided into several sections for discernment by considering the question:

How is God calling us to be a Christ-centred Church that is:

Missionary and evangelising  
Inclusive, participatory and synodal  
Prayerful and Eucharistic  
Humble, healing and merciful  
A joyful, hope-filled and servant community  
Open to conversion, renewal and reform

So far there have been more than 220,000 participants which is exciting and encouraging for our Australian Catholic Church. This will affect all our Christian traditions in the way in which we strive to live as Catholic Christians and it gives me great personal hope for our Church.

May this beginning of a new liturgical year inspire you with hope in Christ's coming and hope for his Church in Australia.

**Dr Angela McCarthy**

As we begin a new liturgical year we are mindful that 2020 promises to be an exciting year for the Church in Australia with the Plenary Council to be held in October 2020. During this Advent Season we are reminded of the work and power of the Holy Spirit in the life of Mary and in the story of salvation. The power of the Holy Spirit comes upon Mary and the Emmanuel, God is with us, takes flesh in the world. This event is only possible because of the Fiat of Mary "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." (Luke 1:38)

The Second Vatican Council speaks of Mary as a Model of the Church. We are encouraged to pray in this liturgical year that the Church in Australia, like Mary, may be open and receptive to the power of the Holy Spirit as we are called to listen and discern. May this openness to the Spirit bring forth into the world the new ways of being the presence of Christ and the instrument of God's love for all people.

As this edition of Pastoral Liturgy is being prepared our co-editor Dr Angela McCarthy has been unwell and has had major surgery. She is now on the mend. We hope and pray that she is returned to full health and will continue to bring her enthusiasm for the church and all things liturgical back to her work.

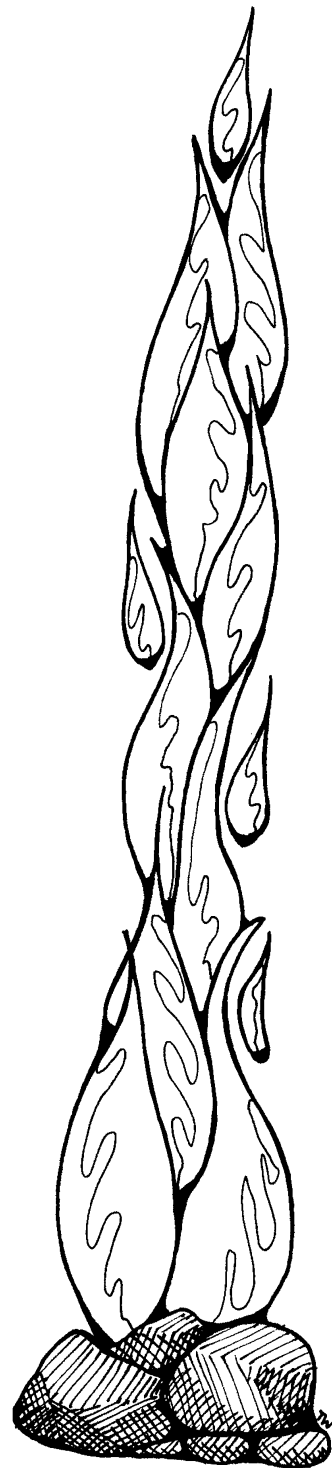
I also join with Angela in thanking those members of the editorial board who are finishing in this role. I thank them for their wisdom and advice. I also welcome the new members of the board and thank them for their generosity and look forward to the freshness and enthusiasm of new ideas and new ways forward.

I would also like to thank Dr Peta Wellstead for stepping in to help out with the preparation of this edition whilst Angela is away. The help is much appreciated.

Wishing you all a blessed Christmas with family and friends and if you get some holidays a time of refreshment and recreation.

God's Blessings,

**Vincent Glynn**



***Christ came  
to bring fire  
to the earth.***

Lk 12:49



# The Prayer of the Faithful: Mystagogy and Performance

by Thomas O'Loughlin

When in 1964 the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy mandated that the Prayer of the Faithful be restored to the eucharistic liturgy very few, liturgists apart, had any concrete idea, much less experience, what that Prayer would look like. The very general descriptive phrase it used was destined to have a curiously long life:

By this prayer, in which the people are to take part, intercession shall be made for the holy Church, for the civil authorities, for those oppressed by various needs, for all the people, and for the salvation of the entire world.<sup>1</sup>

By way of justification for this listing it appealed in a footnote to 1 Tim 2:1-2; presumably as providing a mandate for the prayer from either scripture or the practice of the early church.

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings (*eucharistias*) be made for everyone, for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity (1 Tim 2:1-2).

This very complex piece of apologetic, demonstrating that despite their rejection of 'groves and altars' – to use Menucius Felix's expression - the Christians were not anti-civic atheists, is pressed into service to justify, apparently, both the notion of specific petitions and also that praying for earthly rulers, most of whom by the 1960s, unlike the kings of yore could not claim any sacral connection, might take place within the liturgy.

That few really knew what was involved, much less the theological justification for the practice as the work of a priestly people, became apparent in that the Consilium issued a document the following year giving far more detail on this prayer and publishing with it a set of specimen prayers.<sup>2</sup> This elaborate document, with a detailed historical analysis, more or less disappeared: it has had little impact on later discussion of the Prayer nor upon this practice. The specimen prayers – similar to the specimen prayers found in the 1969 missal – have more or less established the common form of this Prayer since that time. This form is a series of statements according to the formula 'For ... that ... Lord hear us.'

When the General Instruction on the Roman Missal appeared in 1969 this Prayer received three short paragraphs that really did little more than repeat the mandate from *Sacrosanctum concilium*.<sup>3</sup> The Consilium document was not mentioned but there was a statement that Prayer was an exercise of the people's priestly function – an idea given elaborate expression in the Consilium document; the list of petitions from *Sacrosanctum concilium* was repeated and then given as a sequence of numbered items that were 'as a rule' to be included (but it noted that the petitions could be linked more specifically to certain celebrations); and, lastly, it noted that the presider could open and close the prayer, with the intentions

being announced by another, and the response could be verbal or silent prayer.<sup>4</sup> As is the way with ritual, a pattern soon emerged and has remained more or less unchanged ever since. It is generally perceived to be a fairly simple and uncontroversial part of the liturgy. It is also widely viewed as not that important partly because its content can be locally composed, partly because it is seen as an option (and so an 'extra') and partly because a series of 'Lord graciously hear us' do not seem much more than part of a formulaic exchange of words.

The quality of the celebration of this Prayer varies from those places where this is a perfunctory rite to far more elaborate ways of drawing the community into the prayer. In most parishes the standard form on Sundays is a sequence of requests, about half a dozen in number, read from a text by one of the readers; and the structure of the prayers – when taken from printed sources - is quite closely modelled on those from the specimen sets of petitions published in 1966.

The celebration has not been immune from problems. These could be placed under three headings.

First, a lack of appreciation of what is taking place in the Prayer. This is evidenced by the names given to it. By far the most common in Britain is 'Bidding Prayers' which despite its deep Anglo-Saxon roots from *bet-* (the Old High German root for asking / praying) is now confusing. At best it is taken to mean just a string of requests, or more generally a shopping list or a wish list. Elsewhere the most common name is 'the *Prayers of the Faithful*' – note the plural – with its sense that it can be either a list of wants or that it can be any set of prayers that the people want to utter.

Second, there are elements that confuse what is intended. The most common expression of this of is the recitation of the 'Hail Mary' by the whole congregation – now fairly widespread – justified on the basis that this is combining 'our prayers with Mary's' but without noting that what follows is not a petition to God the Father but a prayer of praise to a creature. In some places if there is a novena in progress the prayers of the novena are substituted. In other places the petitions are framed as requests of the Christ – this is particularly prevalent where there is an opening to the gathering to give voice to their own petitions and prayers to Jesus seem to emerge naturally – or formal prayers to the Christ for mercy as used instead of petitions.

And third, many people have great difficulty in thinking that by saying something similar to 'Lord graciously hear us' that they have actually prayed. There is perceived to be a lack of engagement with the prayer. The sequence has the sense of that which is fixed in the script, the same sort of stuff each day, and it tells God what should happen – it is as predictable as 'the nod to God' one expects from American politicians.

And while the existential needs of humanity may not change – for peace and security, that the hungry may have food, the sick healing, and those in crisis may have deliverance – the repetition of the same phrases fall into the ritual trap of the quotidian being boring.

One other aspect of community prayer needs also to be kept in mind. There is a truth known to poets that if a poem wants to engage with a universal truth, it must engage closely with a particular. The more particular a poem's focus, the more it says about the great scheme of things. This insight seems to apply equally to that form of *poesis* which is intercessory prayer. We pray most intently for the Church, the world, the big problems when we focus on the particular need that we see, experience and feel just before our eyes. Keats engages with the mystery of time in a Grecian urn, Gerard Manley Hopkins has the 'inscape' of the creation in the flight of a small bird, and so it is in praying that we find a new person to lead our music that we start to see the need to pray that all Christians will actualise their vocations. The formal list of 'universal Church' followed by 'public authorities' and 'the salvation of the world' followed by 'those oppressed by any need' followed by 'the local community' runs right against the grain of this poetic truth. Following it does not ensure a universality or a roundedness, but simply a retreat to formal generalisations and cold abstractions. All of which may indeed be true, and merit an assent, but if 'Lord graciously hear us' is to be more than such a nod of agreement we have to begin elsewhere.

So the renewal of this prayer called for a greater level of appreciation – by all concerned – of what we are doing in this prayer. This is best considered as an element of mystagogy because there is no simple 'fact' to be understood (as if it were a matter of catechesis or liturgical training) but rather everyone needs to grow in their own sense of what makes this special. So it is a deeper awareness of the mystery of the Church, a sense of the vocation of the Church as a priestly people who give voice to the creation's need to be heard expressing its dependence on God, and an awareness of the priestly nature of our baptism. This growth in awareness cannot be quantified, and one can quantify obliquely catechetical tasks, because our understanding of God's mercy, that the Father listens to our needs, and our sense of our vocation in the Christ cannot be complete. We shall only be fully aware of the mercifulness of God when we are in the divine presence; as Paul expressed it 'For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood' (1 Cor 13:12). Likewise, no two members of the Church have the same experience of prayer nor pray in the exact same way, and we can grow in our appreciation of the need for prayer and the nature of prayer that is most appropriate and our own. Therefore, participation in the Prayer of the Faithful is not to be imagined as another ritual task, but as a time in each liturgy – for the Prayer is to be part of every liturgy<sup>6</sup> – when we actualise part of what was begun in baptism and which, whether we 'understand' it in that way or not, is part of being on Christian pilgrimage.

However, while a case can be made for addressing the nature of the Prayer from either the standpoint of our absolute creaturely dependence or from the sacerdotal nature of the incarnation which continues within the Church as the Lord's Body, neither of these are appropriate to what is an activity of the Church. The place to start is with the experience of the performance of the prayer, and especially what we can say about that performance after half-a-century of practice.

The formats produced in 1965 looked back to historical precedents and to specific occasions in the liturgy such as the Good Friday prayers and the *Orationes imperatae* as found in the *Graduale*, but these examples were taken from a liturgy that was not in the vernacular nor one which had the level of congregational engagement we take for granted. Moreover, it made other assumptions that in 1965 have been by-passed by developments.

First, they assumed that there was a hierarchically rational structure to the Prayer (universal Church, civil society, the local church, particular needs) which provides a useful taxonomy lest the Prayer become a list of 'my wants' – what one liturgist referred to with the wonderful phrase: 'a letter to Santa' – but this does not reflect how most people do pray or recall those aspects of life for which they want to pray.

Second, while they recognised intellectually that this Prayer could not be confined to a written-out textual format, they were so embedded in the fixed-text world of Trent, where every word uttered was formally published, that they created as the usual standard practice that the core of this Prayer is read petitions. However, in those areas where we are most anxious to pray there is little place for such formulae; while such formulae give the impression that this is merely a formulaic event rather than something we would recognise experientially as petitions for our deeply felt needs.

Third, a change has taken place within our liturgical culture, first recognised by Marshall McLuhan in the 1960s, whereby we have moved beyond 'the Gutenberg Galaxy' and in our rituals we evaluate meaning coupled with authenticity as *the value*.<sup>6</sup> Only that which is felt and seen to come from the heart has any personal value: thoughts remain below. This means that room for 'private prayer,' silent prayer, and spontaneous prayer has to be given a priority – this was only glimpsed by the 1965 Consilium document – or the Prayer risks being dismissed as just more words, a bore, or 'mere ritual.'

What would such a performance of the Prayer look like? It is to sketch one scenario for performance that is the concern of the remainder of this paper. I imagine it as a number of modules – each here listed by a capital letter – some of which are essential (i.e. always present), some of which are usually present, and some of which are only occasionally present. It is the challenge of those who plan and lead liturgy to adapt to the fact that no two gatherings are ever the same – even in a monastic community time is moving on, the situation of the members of that church are changing and the world in which they pray is changing; and this Prayer is a priestly reaction to the moment in which that church finds itself gathering.

**A.** The presider introduces the Prayer. The primary rationale of this element, obviously essential, is that it makes a boundary for this event from what has taken place whether that is a reading, a homily, a profession of faith, or something else. In terms of content the primary focus must be on who we are as a People such that we can intercede. So phrases such as 'because we are the priestly people we have a duty to intercede for all humanity and for our sisters and brothers' or 'gathered with Jesus our High Priest, let us ask the Father for our needs.' The second content element is to make clear the One whom we are addressing: the Father. We are in the Christ and with the Christ and we pray through the Christ, but the focus of petition is neither the Son nor the Spirit (and certainly none of the saints) but the All Holy Father. This latter point should not need stating but we have developed so many confused habits in this regard that we need to be vigilant.

The Prayer is not simply an element of the eucharistic liturgy but, ideally, of every liturgy and so we need to think of this as the presider's function rather than 'the priest's task' – every Christian is, after all, a member of the priestly people whose Prayer this is. This introduction can introduce and lead directly into the first element which is a call to the gathering to pray in silence.

**B.** A role for silent prayer has always been envisaged as part of this Prayer not only in the modern documents but in the moments spent kneeling between the statement and the collect in the Good Friday intercessions, but when it is included in the Prayer at the Eucharist it is invariably at the end of the sequence and seen as a 'catch all.' Therefore, it becomes (when used – and in many places there is no time for any silent prayer) an 'add on' which sends the signal: we have just dealt with the big matters, but if there are any private needs we can now pray for those needs in silence. However, we should place it first.

By beginning with silent prayer by and from all, we focus people on the need to ask the Father for what we all need. We begin with those needs for which we are, out of our own existence, moved to pray. After a moment or two – it has to be long enough to let us settle and get over coughing – a voice other than the presider's can help us to recall for whom and what we want to pray. So the reflection – the tone is that of a reflection – could take this form:

'Who have we promised to pray for during the week?' *Pause.* 'Who is in need in our family?' *Pause.* 'Who is sick?' *Pause.* 'Who is going through problems?' *Pause.* 'What about the people we work with?' *Pause.* 'For what else do I need to pray?' *Pause.* 'Did I say to anyone else "I will pray for you!"?' *Pause.*

By focusing on our individual actuality we focus our collective attention on this aspect of all liturgy. Our activity of praying for those whom we know and are close to us and whose problems worry us, 'switches on' our concern and alerts us to the links that bind us humanly as sisters and brothers as at the Lord's family.

**C.** We come to every liturgy with the concerns of the world echoing in our minds, and the liturgy, in virtue of the Logos having pitched his tent among us (Jn 1:14), takes place in the heart of the creation. The liturgy is not an alternative place to the world but where the creation is brought by our priestly consciousness into a relationship with God. This means that just as awareness of what is important to us 'right now' – the news – has a place in this Prayer.

In many places this is a standard element of the Prayer with either a special text produced for an event (e.g. 'for the victims of the recent flooding') or a text adlibbed by the presider. This is more than a case of 'keeping it relevant' it is an expression that we as God's People keep any and all who are suffering or in need, or in our care – and part of this is our prayer. But where should we locate it in the performance and what form should it take?

If we are serious that liturgy is the summit of the Christian life, rather than a pious track running parallel to life, then our prayer for the urgent events of the day must be at the top, or close to the top of those specifics we mention in the Prayer. Moreover, we should avoid the 'for ... that God ...' formula in favour of 'for those ...' and then leave silence for the gathering to recall, sympathise and pray.<sup>7</sup>

This formula of a mention followed by silence is preferable for several reasons.

- Because it does not seem to tell God what to do.
- Nor tell others what 'we' think should be done.
- Sound trite as if there is a simple answer that will 'make everything OK again.'
- It avoids stock turns of phrase that make the action of praying appear but a formulaic response such as we hear from some politicians such as 'they are in our thoughts and prayers.'
- Avoids in some situations appearing as if God is on one side of a conflict (invariably the side of the one praying).
- Avoids the need to script a text for someone leading the prayer who would find a more elaborate formula uncomfortable without a written text. So, for example, after a gun-outrage or terrorist incident: 'For all those caught up in the attack in X on Thursday' followed by silence or by 'Let us pray' and then silence. Then after that pause 'For the victims of Cyclone X' and so for the two or three 'top stories' of the moment. Thereby we address the desire that we make 'intercession ... for the civil authorities, for those oppressed by various needs, for all the people, and for the salvation of the entire world.'

Once again, the prayer evoked within the Prayer is not simply a token word but the more heartfelt reflection of the assembly's members such that if one of the group were asked after the liturgy 'did you pray for those caught up in the disaster?', that person would say without hesitation: 'Yes, we prayed for all those people at Mass.'



**D.** Every liturgy takes place at a specific time (e.g. Lent or Ordinary Time) or for some specific reason (e.g. a funeral or wedding or as part of the initiation process) – and it would be bizarre if that actual occasion were not a cause of our intercession. Indeed, in all the rubrical mentions of this Prayer this fact is mentioned and that ‘the list of intercessions may be more closely concerned with the special occasion.’ These petitions tend to be more closely focussed on the Church and on the local community, and the formats that we have used most commonly are probably best suited to this part of the Prayer. So we have those aspects of the situation where we are, more or less, agreed on what precisely we as a group want, and then all can join in that prayerful wish with a great shout of ‘Lord graciously hear us!’ in response to the announcer’s ‘Lord hear us!’

All of the gathering can be agreed that we wish the newly wed a long and happy life together and that we would ask the Father to grant them this. We can all share in the prayer that God who is the source of all mercy and consolation would take pity on the family of our deceased sister or brother. We can assume that all Christians wish to be renewed in their discipleship this Lent. But we may have to think more clearly – and so have to have it brought to our attention – that the Lord would comfort those who find the prospect of Christmas daunting or frightening. These petitions are, in a sense predictable, but they should be normally be written so that we do not ‘trip off’ hackneyed jargon; and thereby miss the detail of local, thought out, specificity. At a wedding recently I came across a situation that elegantly makes this point: the presider asked one of the guests to read the intercessions and provided a booklet. The reader, anxious to fulfil the task and clearly fearful lest any word be omitted, read the first two petitions without a murmur, but became more hesitant at the third: ‘That God will bless their union with children and help them to be good parents, Lord hear us!’ The hesitancy in the voice was not doctrinal – though I doubt the reader recognised the quotation from the now little used ‘Nuptial Blessing’ – not even moral, but from an awareness of the local facts: both spouses were in their seventies.

But should this section of the Prayer (assuming it contains more than one supplication) not come first? After all, if it is a celebration of confirmation, surely prayers for those who have just been confirmed should come before all else? My answer is an emphatic rejection of this for two reasons. Moving from listening (to the readings and the homily) and reflection (the psalm and what has been sparked off within us by the readings and the gospel) or singing (the psalm, other acclamations, possibly the profession of faith) or recitation (the profession of faith) to engaging in prayer needs space and a period for transition: this is supplied in the silent reflective prayer at the beginning. Second, no matter what we are celebrating, we are part of a larger world and it is simply acknowledging reality that we make our prayerful wishes which belong to the season or our particular church secondary to the big issues in the world for which we as a priestly

people have been called to make intercession. At a wedding we need to realise that our joyfulness is set in a world where there are big problems that set our prayerful wishes in perspective. During Eastertide we may truly pray that we discover resurrection in our lives, but if we have first been reminded of the closeness of the reign of death, we might more appreciate that prayer for the new life of Easter.

Not only does every celebration have a specific focus and time, that notion of ‘what we are praying for today’ – the curious nexus of memory, awareness and need – can have very precise dimensions for an assembly; and if this is not given expression in this Prayer then it has failed to be a link between us and God, and between our situation and the promise of salvation which the Father has uttered to the creation.

This is obvious when we have specially designated Sundays for a specific need such as ‘Mission Sunday’ – and very often special groups provide a text of this Prayer as a liturgical resource for such days.<sup>8</sup> But it also includes those aspects of time that only hover on the edge of the world of formal liturgy: Mothers’ Day (with some liturgical precedent as Laetare), Fathers’ Day (none save as a balance to Mothers’ Day), significant anniversaries where the community would wish to pray, and birthdays. There is no area of human existence where there is not need of divine help, reconciliation and healing – and therefore drawing those areas within the range of our common prayer is part of our priestly vocation as the People of God.

**E.** The Prayer is envisaged as always taking place at the conclusion of a Liturgy of the Word, and within the eucharistic liturgy this is its fixed place. Moreover, the Consilium document makes a case that this is the place for it as the summit of the Liturgy of the Word:

The reason is that this prayer is the fruit, as it were, of the working of the word of God in the hearts of the faithful: instructed, stirred and renewed by the word, all stand together to offer prayer for the needs of the whole Church and the whole world.<sup>9</sup>

This statement can be read as a theological truth that our willingness to turn to God and make expression of our needs fits within the pattern of revelation and the covenant of invitation and response. The creature in discovering its creaturehood and the loving invitation of God calling the human being into relationship – seen to occur in hearing the word of God – now turns towards God and acts out this relationship in making intercession. However, it is also a guide to performance in that it seemed to envisage the content of the particular readings inspiring petitions at each liturgy. The Prayer has certainly developed in this way in that many communities use the readings as their source of inspiration for the petitions and most books of liturgical resources try to link the readings and the petitions. Indeed, it would be bizarre if having given attention to readings we then were not inspired by them in this Prayer.

That said, making a link from one of the lections to an intercessory need, is far more difficult than is commonly realised. The readings sometimes simply do not contain material that can lead to intercession, and it is often the case that while they might contain such for one group, those same readings might not provoke prayer in another situation. It can also depend on the way that the readings have been taken up in the homily as to whether they inspire petitions or not. There is, of course, the technique of imagining each reading as having a 'moral lesson' and then making that the basis of a prayer, but the results are usually predictable, generic, and fostering of the notion that the task of religion and ritual is to promote a moral ordering in society.

It is often only through a careful reflection on what has been heard that we see that for which we should offer intercession. This needs planning and may require a rather detailed introduction if the community are to see why *this* is something for which they should pray. Assuming that there are such petitions, then they should be 'down the list' of intercessions introduced *after* the community have moved into an attitude of prayer and after they have prayed for those needs that are more obvious.

**F.** Every local church is a gathering of groups and a community and without those actualisations of the ministry of the Christ which deal with the specific needs of the community it will indeed be a poor one. There are groups who deal with the poor, those who promote justice, prayer groups, those involved in schooling and catechesis, and even the liturgy group who have particular needs which they may want to bring to the whole community for its intercession. These groups need a space to share their need for prayer with the whole church. This is often recognised inchoately in that if a succession of people are to voice the intercessions, those people are often representatives for those groups. But the nature of the church demands something more than this: if a group has a particular need, it should explain that need to the assembly and ask the assembly to then make that need their own in prayer.

**G.** One group that has a special call on our prayers, and so has a special place in this Prayer, is the sick. This is not only because this is often one of the most pressing matters worrying the members of the community and one of those areas where, even in a secular age, we still express our willingness to pray for one another, but because sickness and recovery is a key paradigm of our relationship in the Christ. Jesus the priest is the *salvator* – the bringer of healing or the healer – and his reconciliation of the community with the Father is modelled by us as act of healing. Jesus is presented throughout the *kerugma* as the One bringing healing and deliverance from the agony of sickness (e.g. Mk 5:25-34 or Jn 5:2-9); and our prayer is a continuance of that ministry. Likewise, from the earliest times the community praying for its sick members was part of its group-work, its *leitourgia*, as we see incidentally in the letter of James 5:14-5.

But while we may pray generically for 'all the sick' we need to give this particular expression because 'the sick' is not a reference to an undifferentiated mass, but refers to individual brothers or sisters who are sick. So we need to create a silent space where we help people recall those whom they know who are sick, the sick to whom they promised their prayers, and those who have asked their prayers. This overlaps with the intentions in the opening moment of the Prayer ('B' above), but this repetition is not a problem because we only move slowly into the mode of praying for those whom we meet. In some communities they have found ways of identifying those sick people whose names are mentioned – e.g. 'Let's remember Ann Other whose operation is tomorrow' – and when this can be done we are not only enriching this Prayer but giving reality to the fictive family<sup>10</sup> that is the liturgical community and the Church.

**H.** For most of Christian history, and part of our inheritance from the Judaism of the Second Temple, praying for the dead has been a central element in common prayer. Indeed, having lists of the names of the dead has a complex history within the development of the Roman Canon, and still today most of our Eucharistic Prayers not only mention the dead but have a provision for inserting names. While allowing that this can be a very sensitive ecumenical issue (though one not nearly so contentious as even a generation ago),<sup>11</sup> this is not a problematic area for most Catholics. Moreover, if the petition includes a list of names, the traditional formula 'may their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed ...' can act not only as the prayer at this point, but it acts as a clear verbal boundary for the end of this prayer and moves the focus back to the presider.

**I.** The presider brings the Prayer to its conclusion with a collect. This should not only emphasise that we are praying *per Christum dominum nostrum*, but that this moment is also the conclusion of the Liturgy of the Word and so its content should be keyed to it.

In this sequence I have identified seven headings running from silence through to having a list of the dead whose anniversaries we recall. While the whole range might appear to overload a single celebration, if this is an event of prayer – the liturgical space that corresponds to the Church's need to make intercession – then the importance should be more visible. We are not just making a few petitions as if 'having a Prayer of the Faithful' is just another ritual element to be accounted for, but engaging in an exercise of who we are given where we are now.

This leaves one other issue: can we leave the petitions of the Prayer to be supplied spontaneously by the assembly? Clearly, this works very well in many situations and allows the assembly to give voice to its needs in prayer. Some communities have little difficulty with either the idea or speaking spontaneously from within the group. Moreover, the objections to the practice are not such that they dismiss the idea but rather show that it is a matter of pastoral judgment

based on local experience. The practice works best when the community is fairly cohesive in make-up and where there is a clear sense that they are taking part in liturgy with a common purpose. It works least well when the general notion of liturgy is one of 'we are here to get Mass.' The fears about the practice are obvious. In every assembly there are some who are naturally talkative and those who would never voice an opinion – and so the same people 'are always chipping in.' This is not problematic in itself in that we always expect those with a given ability to supply that skill to the group. It is only a problem if someone is so engaged that they get on everyone else's nerves: if there is a vexatious supplicant in the community, then maybe this needs a pastoral remedy. A more common problem with spontaneous contributions is that they tend to become formulaic: the same person used the very same words again and again. In this case we are moving along a spectrum with a person asking for prayer, at one end, to someone simply 'adding their bit' at the other – and again this is a matter of pastoral judgement. The most serious problem with the practice is the danger that the petitions become weaponized as part of attack on others in the community or to advance an agenda within the community. But this is not just a problem of opening this Prayer up to 'contributions from the floor' but a more fundamental problem. Indeed, the most egregious example of this I have witnessed recently was from a presider who uttered this: 'we pray that we will all receive the Precious Body of our Lord Jesus Christ on our tongues with the greatest reverence, and may non-Catholics who can only receive a blessing, receive this with the greatest reverence, Lord hear us.' This presbyter was clearly uncomfortable with the reformed liturgy and an adherent of a particular churchmanship, but while, no doubt, thought this was a suitable vehicle for giving notices to the congregation, this behaviour was, objectively, blasphemous in that a 'prayer' was being subverted from its true end, in God, into being a tool in administration.

There are two factors which have a key bearing on whether or not spontaneous contributions will be beneficial rather than destructive. The first is the fact of the size of the group. A group that is so large that there will be a sizable proportion of people who are anonymous, will probably not be a group in which an invitation to contribute will lead to a more reflective experience of prayer. Second, the shape of the space in which the liturgy takes place impacts on whether spontaneous contributions will contribute to, or distract from, prayer. If people are assembled in such a way that everyone is visible to everyone else, then this fosters a sense of togetherness and shows that each has a contribution to make. If the group is in rows as in an auditorium, then voices 'off stage' tend to surprise / distract rather than add to our sense of being a community at prayer.

Is there a perfect form? Prayer is always individual, even when it is the whole ecclesia that prays, and so is endlessly open to variation. Prayer is a learned part of discipleship – see Lk 11:1 – and so it is a skill, a way of doing, that is one of the elements of our *didache*,<sup>12</sup> and as such we need constant practice and revision.

We have had this Prayer as a regular part of our liturgy for just over half a century and during this time we have learned much about how to do it and to do it well, but we must not stop learning so that we can become more skilful in this art form. And, the more affectively we pray this Prayer, the more the activity will be a mystagogy of our baptismal identity as a priestly people who give voice to the cries of the creation before the divine Father.

<sup>1</sup> *Sacrosanctum concilium*, n. 53 – all translations shall follow that found in *Documents on the Liturgy 1963-1979: Conciliar, Papal, and Curial Texts* (Collegeville, MN 1982) [hereafter: DOL], p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> The published text of this document appeared in 1966 and is found in DOL, pp. 594-603.

<sup>3</sup> GIRM, nn. 45-7.

<sup>4</sup> GIRM, n. 47.

<sup>5</sup> This is de facto the case in almost every liturgy for which there is now a set ritual, but the 1966 Consilium document saw it as an aspect of every gathering; see DOL, p. 239, n. 1893.

<sup>6</sup> M. McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (London 1962), pp. 137-44.

<sup>7</sup> On the viability of each formula, see the Consilium document, DOL, n. 1901.

<sup>8</sup> See the analysis of those supplied in Australia for National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Sunday in J.F. Fitz-Herbert and C. Pilcher, 'Towards Inculturation: An Australian Indigenous Contribution' in C. Pilcher, D. Orr, and E. Harrington eds, *Vatican Council II: Reforming Liturgy* (Adelaide, 2013), 61-79 at 75.

<sup>9</sup> DOL, n. 1894.

<sup>10</sup> See T. O'Loughlin, 'Fictive Families – Real Churches: commensality and pneumatology,' *One in Christ* 50,1(2016)22-37.

<sup>11</sup> One must mention that this practice was one of the major issues at the time of the Reformation and was a key part of the objections to the notion of Masses as countable quantities of grace (see T. O'Loughlin, 'Treating the "Private Mass" as Normal: Some Unnoticed Evidence from Adomnán's *De locis sanctis*,' *Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft* 51(2009)334-44 for a bibliography), it would take me too far from my purpose to discuss this here.

<sup>12</sup> On *didache* as a set of skills, see T.O'Loughlin, 'The Missionary Strategy of the *Didache*,' *Transformation* 28(2011)77-92.



EACH IS GIVEN  
THE SPIRIT FOR THE  
COMMON GOOD.



# Celebrating Liturgy in Schools: Catholic Identity in Song

by Fiona Dyball

**Editor's note:** This article was first published in *The Summit Online* and is reproduced with the permission of the author and the Archbishop's Office for Evangelisation, Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne.

Be not afraid. I go before you always.  
Come, follow me, and I will give you rest.

*Be Not Afraid* by Bob Dufford SJ has been sung at countless Catholic high school graduations. This hymn of faith and trust in the accompaniment of God in times of trial and hardship might seem a challenging choice in some ways, as the hymn speaks openly and poetically of moving in and through difficult emotions and life situations. However, it was one of the greatest prayers I could have received as a young person going out into the world from the safety of my tight-knit Catholic school community. Anchored in Sacred Scripture, the hymn is based on Isaiah 43:2-3 and Luke 6:20 and emphasises God's care and presence always and everywhere. God leads people forward in love into greater fullness of life, despite all obstacles. I have regularly prayed this prayer in song since singing it for the first time at high school, and it has always affirmed in me the resilience that faith in Christ freely offers. Singing this hymn with others in community over years has consistently allowed me to experience renewed courage, hope, and peace.

Giving children rich Catholic liturgical music to sing that will console them in difficult times and help them celebrate in times of joy is a gift that can be offered through liturgies at primary and secondary Catholic schools, and especially at highlight events like opening Masses, feast days, and graduations. Beautiful music with a strong Scripture-based text that is sung often can ignite and animate the Christic imagination in the long-term memory of students, teachers, and parents. It can also be a powerful means of evangelisation. Singing of God's promises, works, nature, and deeds reinforces an embodied sacramental worldview of all times and places being touched by the presence of a loving God.

## **Mentoring, modelling, remuneration and repertoire**

It is important that the liturgical music chosen for liturgy is modelled, known and sung by all where possible (including male and female teachers), not just by a few select students. Training cantors prepares for the dialogical and invitational singing of the Responsorial Psalm, but cantors and choirs should ideally never replace the voice of the people in sung prayer in all other parts of a liturgy. A Leader of Song can teach new music and support singing while it

takes hold in a community: but the song belongs to all and it is desired that it be sung by all at most points, especially in the Mass.

Promoting communal singing means scheduled class and year level rehearsals offered over time with a skilled facilitator, as in any formation program (just like sports training). This remains the same for primary and secondary contexts. A four-week minimum time frame of weekly one hour rehearsals in preparation for a key liturgical event is standard practice in setting up non-professional musicians for success. It also attracts students for future events if they know that they are part of something positive, valued, and well organised. Commitment to a financial outlay that includes *school experienced, qualified, and pastorally sensitive live musicians* needs to be included in the Mission or Religious Education budget for liturgies as a matter of course and usual practice.

A well-known core repertoire slowly added to over time is preferable over a rapidly changing collection of yearly 'hits' when encouraging young people to sing with confidence and joy. This creates a shared musical and sacramental memory. A consistent weekly rehearsal, one well-known Mass setting, one new psalm setting, and two new hymns/pieces a year is a good start in promoting and growing a repertoire that all people have the chance to enjoy singing with confidence throughout their time at school (see **Appendix 1** for musical repertoire suggestions for secondary school graduations; **Appendix 2** for links to pay scales for professional musicians and other useful resources; and **Appendix 3** for an event management timeline/checklist for end-of-year Masses).

## **Transformative mission in the world**

The primary role of music in the celebration of the liturgy is as helping the members of the gathered assembly join themselves to the action of Christ and to give voice to the gift of faith.<sup>1</sup> Liturgical music is sacramental and deeply tied to the rite itself, so it's necessary to choose music that matches different parts of the Mass well.<sup>2</sup> Music is part of the larger goals and purposes of liturgy: the glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful.<sup>3</sup> This leads to transformative mission in the world to work towards and to be a witness to the Kingdom of God in the world.

The foundational document on liturgy from Vatican II, the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 1963), is clear in according a high value to musical training in Catholic schools. Article 115 states that

Great importance is to be attached to the teaching and practice of music in ... Catholic institutions and schools. To impart this instruction, teachers are to be carefully trained and put in charge of the teaching of sacred music.

Music Ministers in schools, whether teachers or students, are involved in living Christ-life with others. Involvement in sacred music is acknowledged as one of the most potent means of evangelisation throughout the lifespan, and especially for the young. Musical skills are offered for the service of Christ and the Church: this is the fundamental orientation of the Music Minister, in collaboration with others in ritual, pastoral, and musical matters, as called for in Article 5 of *Musicam Sacram* (Instruction on Music in the Liturgy, 1967).

### Ritual considerations

Liturgy is ritual and not a concert. Catholic rituals are repeated all over the world and we owe it to our students in schools to ensure that the ritual is recognisable and true to Catholic identity. This is particularly important in those schools where liturgy is not often celebrated. Students in Catholic schools should be able to attend Mass and be familiar with the ritual. Involving secondary school students in the selection process for liturgical music helps to increase their liturgical literacy, understanding of the role of Scripture, and their buy-in, as some songs which work well in prayer groups do not necessarily enrich Masses (e.g. 'Oceans' from Hillsong). When people understand liturgy, a song from the Top 10 can also be pastorally directed to the graduation after-party. Having a positive conversation to educate around liturgy in the planning process is integral in growing respectful liturgical awareness with young people. This empowers them to find the right places for music in the cycle of the liturgical year and the flow of the Mass itself. Important ritual considerations include the following:

- The liturgical action and the liturgical moment in the liturgy (e.g. Gathering, Communion), and the liturgical season and readings of the day.
- An understanding of progressive solemnity (e.g. A Graduation Mass will generally have more singing than a regular weekday Mass), and an emphasis on 'we' rather than 'me' in texts chosen for singing.
- The type of ritual. Not every piece of sacred music is appropriate in every context, (e.g. retreat, prayer service, rally, or Mass).
- Music for ritual must be *Christ-centred*, the text must be in line with the teachings of the Catholic Church, and the timing should be appropriate. (e.g. Singing that the resurrection didn't happen won't get a run, and Morning Has Broken isn't a great choice for the end of the day/Vigil Mass).

### Pastoral considerations

- Consultation in the process of choosing the music so that it is accepted, especially with secondary students. Meetings in good time with all people involved attending.
- Musicians and congregations need to be set up for success in realising the music. *It is almost impossible for a school community to sing well a piece they do not know.* People need to be able to see and hear the music and text, and invited clearly in spoken word, written word, and gesture to join in. Similarly, musicians cannot lead music confidently and prayerfully if they are not familiar with the text and music and have had not had time to rehearse.
- Cultural awareness and sensitivity are integral. For example, in a community that has a strong Tongan representation, there should be some songs/responses/acclamations in that language. Many African, Islander, and Vietnamese communities will also incorporate dance into processions. Openness, sensitivity and consultation are important in working with people of different cultural backgrounds and traditions. Diversity enriches all.

### Musical considerations

- **The music must be led well** by a pastorally and musically skilled practitioner, and musical choices must be able to be sung and played well by the people in any given community. Rehearsing the Responsorial Psalm and new music for communal singing before every Mass in a prayerful way allows people the chance to join in when invited.
- **Liturgical music is prayer** and should always point to God. Great performance skills are laid at the service of supporting the collective sung prayer of the people: there is space for a suitable piece by a soloist or choral group (especially at the Procession of the Gifts) but the voice of the people is the voice to be encouraged and supported in most parts of a celebration
- **Pieces must be well-constructed**, remaining fresh after repeated playing and singing over time. (e.g. A hymn text set to a pop tune, a ringtone, or a footy song would be a no-go, even though it might be catchy).
- **Selecting music** from Catholic Worship Book II, As One Voice, and from other legally purchased Catholic sources (digital download from Willow and Marist Music in Australia, and GIA, OCP and WLP in the US) helps to build a common repertoire and skill students for musical and liturgical leadership.
- **The culture of people matters.** Sensitivity is required in multicultural contexts, as is humility and joy in listening and learning to play the music of different cultures.

- **A consistent space** in which to rehearse needs to be provided by schools, equipped with robust music stands for the instrumentalists. The space should be large enough for the musicians and singers, not overpowered by other noise, and have a reliable and appropriate harmony instrument (piano, organ, guitar) that is in tune if used (e.g. A full length and at least partially weighted keyboard that makes enough sound).
- **A sound system** (if used) that is set up and run by someone skilled in this area other than the performers shares the workload. This enables the music and singing to be balanced and heard well without overpowering the voice of the people.
- **Enough time** for set up, pack up, sight-line and sound check in the venue is non-negotiable. Checklist and timeline all equipment and support needs as you would for any other large event. This is team event management and needs to be prepared well in advance.
- **A good quality backing track** (instrumental) that can be heard well can be used to support communal singing if there is no other resource available. Backing tracks with guide vocals are useful for supporting learning but are generally not recommended for live performance. Live music is the ideal and allows a community to breathe together and find its own voice in song.
- **Consistency of music editions**, arrangements, tempos, phrasing, keys (transposing instruments like clarinets and trumpets need to be taken into account for bands), texts, dynamics, introductions and endings. Some music may also need to be transposed in some cases to enable successful communal singing. This should all be ready to go at the start of the rehearsal process, and all singers and musicians need a *legal copy* of the appropriate music (not just a chord chart or lyrics) to be prepared for liturgy. This promotes a growing and engaged liturgical and musical literacy amongst students.

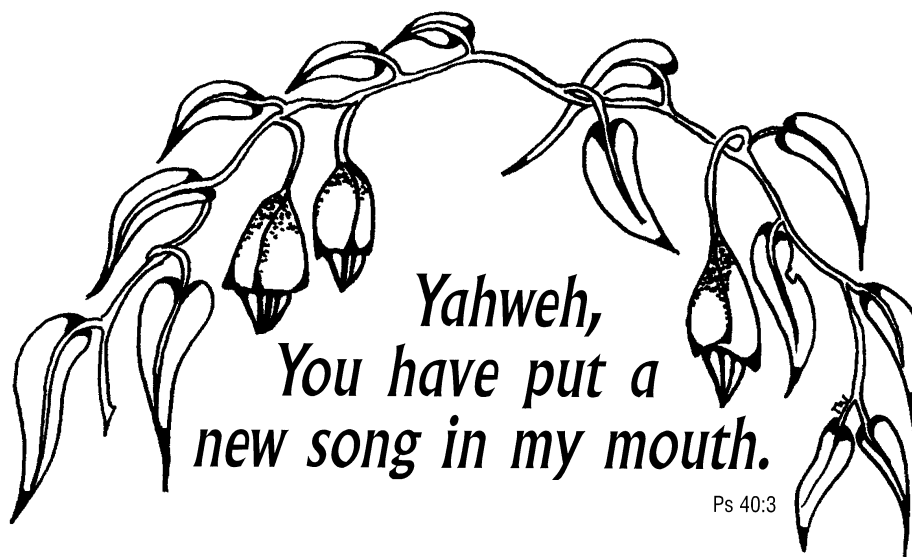
The music of the Church carries a person's faith throughout their life. This is why liturgical music needs to be carefully chosen for school communities so that it is theologically, liturgically, musically, and pastorally sound for the Catholic context. In the interests of building pastorally strong communities, parishes and schools should also hold some music in common. It is hoped that *every student could leave school with a solid intergenerational Catholic liturgical music repertoire* to carry them forward in their lives, and to connect them in prayer to a life-giving faith, lived in community.

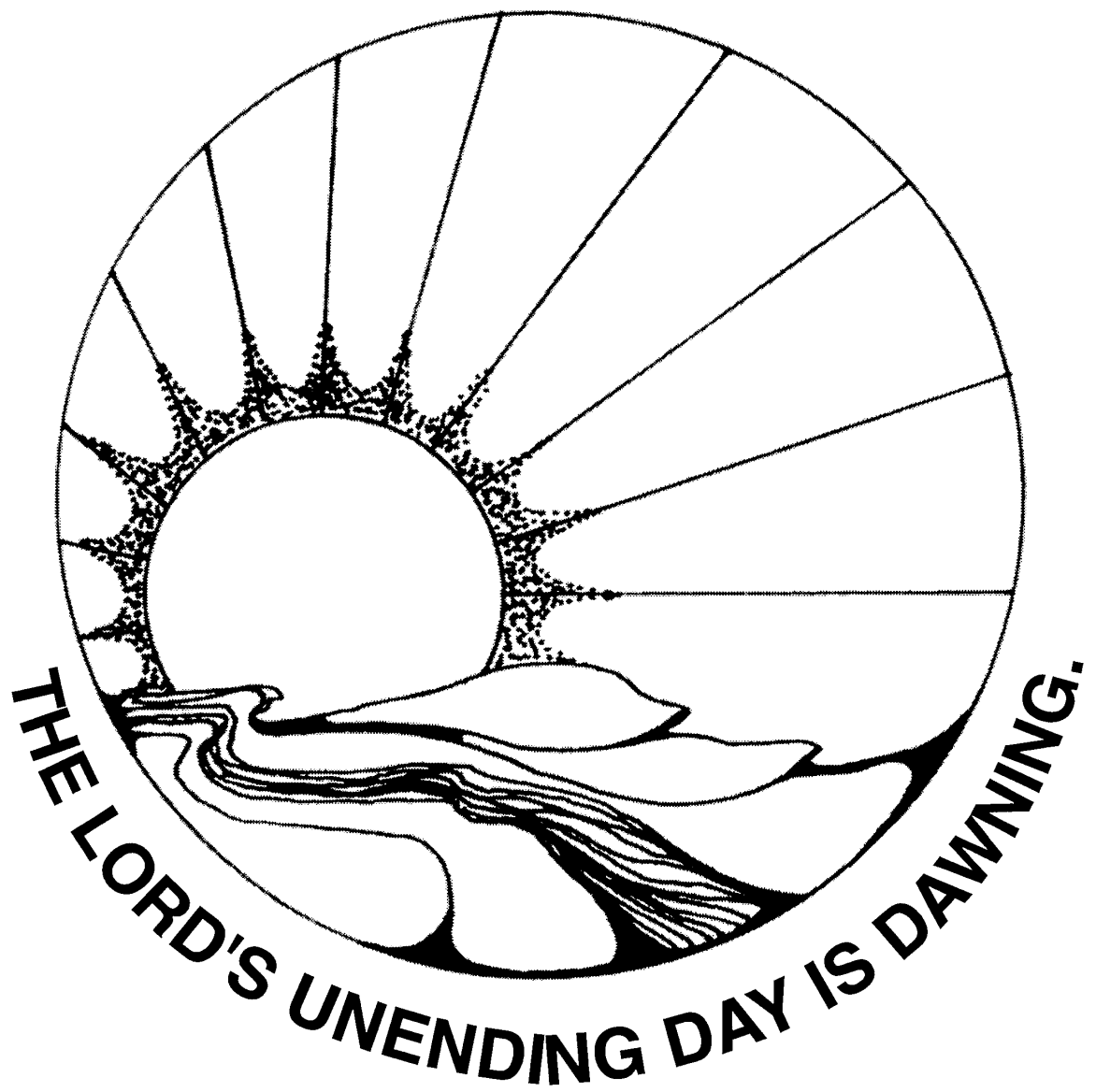
### Appendices

- **Appendix 1:** Road-tested intergenerational repertoire for graduations in Catholic secondary schools <http://www.cam.org.au/Portals/7/Appendix%201%20Singing%20Our%20Catholic%20Identity.pdf?ver=2018-08-22-164247-360>
- **Appendix 2:** Further resources <http://www.cam.org.au/Portals/7/Appendix%202%20Singing%20Our%20Catholic%20Identity.pdf?ver=2018-08-22-164306-713>
- **Appendix 3:** Checklist for planning graduation masses <http://www.cam.org.au/Portals/7/Appendix%203%20Marcellin%20Valedictory%20Timeline.pdf?ver=2018-08-22-164321-700>

### References

- <sup>1</sup> USCCB, *Sing to the Lord* (Washington, USCCB, 2007), article 125.
- <sup>2</sup> Anthony Ruff, *Sacred Music and Liturgical Reform*, 1 SC 112.
- <sup>3</sup> Austin Flannery, *Vatican Council II. Sacrosanctum Concilium*, article 112.







# Advent Wreath for Year A

Adapted by Vincent Glynn

## First Sunday of Advent

### Presider:

Every Advent serves as the introduction to the new liturgical year, even though it is celebrated in the closing weeks of the calendar year. Within the four weeks of the Advent season itself, the Church's liturgy draws attention to different facets of the one reality of how God's plan **has been revealed** in Christ, **is now revealed** in every Mass we celebrate, and that Christ **will be revealed** in his glory, when he comes again at a time we do not know.

For each Sunday of Advent we take our focus for the wreath from our Advent traditions. Like the people of the Old Testament we live in hope for the fullness of the revelation of Christ the Messiah when he comes in glory to judge the living and the dead.

*The Presider blesses the wreath and the assembly with the sprinkling of holy water, using these or similar words:*

Let us pray.  
May the sprinkling of this water  
remind all of us gathered here  
of our first sharing in the grace of baptism.  
During this time of Advent  
may we prepare for the Lord's coming  
with open hearts and minds.  
May this wreath be a symbol to us  
of this time of prayerful watching and waiting  
for the coming of the Lord.

*The Presider or an assistant lights the first candle, which is often named the Prophets' Candle as the prophets prepared the way for the future coming of the Messiah.*

**V.** Lord Jesus, your coming was proclaimed by the prophets of old. The Prophet Isaiah called the Chosen People and today calls all people 'to walk in the light of the Lord.' (First Reading)

**R. Come, Lord Jesus.**

**V.** Lord Jesus, we believe you come among us now. St Paul urges us to be people of the light and to let our armour be the Lord Jesus Christ. (Second Reading)

**R. Come, Lord Jesus.**

**V.** Lord Jesus, you will come again in glory. You ask us to 'stand ready, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour we do not expect.' (Gospel)

**R. Come, Lord Jesus.**

Collect: First Sunday of Advent

### Presider

### Let us pray:

Grant your faithful, we pray, Almighty God, the resolve to run forth to meet your Christ with righteous deeds at his coming, so that gathered at your right hand, they may be worthy to possess the heavenly Kingdom, Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your son, Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, One God for ever and ever.

**R. Amen**

## Second Sunday of Advent

### Presider:

*The Presider or an assistant lights the second candle, which can be named the John the Baptist Candle. John the Baptist was the one who prepared the way for the Lord.*

**V.** Lord Jesus, your coming was proclaimed by the prophets of old. The prophet Isaiah calls us to be a signal to the nations and to recognise the Messiah in our midst. (First Reading)

**R. Come, Lord Jesus.**

**V.** Lord Jesus, you come among us now. St Paul reminds us to treat each other as Christ treats us and so give glory to the God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ. (Second Reading)

**R. Come, Lord Jesus.**

**V.** Lord Jesus, you will come again in glory. John the Baptist calls us to 'repent for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.' (Gospel)

**R. Come, Lord Jesus.**

Collect: Second Sunday of Advent

### Presider

### Let us pray:

Almighty and merciful God,  
may no earthly undertaking hinder those  
who set out in haste to meet your Son,  
but may our learning of heavenly wisdom  
gain us admittance to his company  
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the  
Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

**R. Amen**



### Third Sunday of Advent

**Presider:**

*The Presider or an assistant lights the third candle, which can be named the Saints' Candle to call to mind all the saints who share the life of Christ by being baptised into his Body the Church.*

**V.** Lord Jesus, your coming was foretold by the prophet Isaiah who proclaims 'Look, your God is coming, he is coming to save you.' (First Reading)

**R. Come, Lord Jesus.**

**V.** Lord Jesus, you come among us now as the light of the world. St James urges us to be patient and not to lose heart, the Lord's coming will be soon. (Second Reading)

**R. Come, Lord Jesus.**

**V.** Lord Jesus, you will come again in glory and raise the dead to new life. (Gospel)

**R. Come, Lord Jesus.**

Collect: Third Sunday of Advent

**Presider**

**Let us pray:**

O God, who see how your people  
Faithfully await the feast of the Lord's nativity,  
enable us, we pray,  
to attain the joys of so great a salvation  
and to celebrate them always  
with solemn worship and glad rejoicing.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your son,  
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the  
Holy Spirit,  
One God, for ever and ever.

**R. Amen**

### Fourth Sunday of Advent

**Presider:**

*The Presider or an assistant lights the fourth candle, which is often named the Angel Gabriel Candle for those messengers who bring God's Word into our world.*

**V.** Lord Jesus, your coming was foretold by the prophet Isaiah when he proclaimed 'The maiden is with child and will soon give birth to a son whom she will call Immanuel, a name which means God is with us.' (First Reading)

**R. Come, Lord Jesus.**

**V.** Lord Jesus, you come among us now in your Word and Sacrament to give us the strength to live according to the Good News you revealed. (Second Reading)

**R. Come, Lord Jesus.**

**V.** Lord Jesus, you will come in glory in the fullness of time because you are the Christ the one who has saved his people from their sins. (Gospel)

**R. Come, Lord Jesus.**

Collect: Fourth Sunday of Advent

**Presider**

**Let us pray:**

Let us pray.  
Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord,  
your grace into our hearts,  
that we, to whom the incarnation of Christ your Son  
was made known by the message of an Angel,  
may by his Passion and Cross  
be brought to the glory of his resurrection.  
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the  
Holy Spirit,  
One God, for ever and ever.

**R. Amen**



**Peace be to your homes.**



# 1 December 2019

## First Sunday of Advent

Reflection by Joe Tedesco

### Introduction

Advent is a season where we prepare for the coming of the Lord who breaks into our world, offering salvation to all. Though Christmas and the weeks that lead up to it might be clearly recognisable in our contemporary society, the transformative power of the season is, nevertheless, easily missed. The readings thus encourage us to remain vigilant and prepared.

### Penitential Act

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you came that we might have life.  
Lord have mercy.

You raised the son of the widow of Nain.  
Christ have mercy.

You promise us eternal life with the Father.  
Lord have mercy.

### First Reading

**Isaiah 2:1–5**

The opening reading of Advent presents a majestic scene where people from all nations will come to recognise the goodness of God and God's ways. It reminds us of the universal intent of God's saving activity.

### Second Reading

**Romans 13:11–14**

St. Paul reminds us that being Christian calls us to live 'in the light' of moral goodness; this life in the light can be achieved by immersing the self in Christ.

### Gospel Reading

**Matthew 24:37–44**

The Son of Man comes unexpectedly at a time we cannot know. The call is not to anticipate the hour but, rather, to prepare oneself for the inevitable encounter with the Lord.

### Reflection

The New Testament readings used in this week's Liturgy of the Word are drawn from the Christian tradition which anticipates the return of Jesus Christ and the fullness of salvation as an assured yet mysterious event. Used to open the season of Advent, such texts are drawn on to not only remind believers of our eschatological destiny, but to also point us to the coming of Christ at Christmas – therefore, they offer to us attitudes and virtues to help us journey through this liturgical season.

Looking at the Gospel reading more closely, it has a somewhat ominous tone; like a thief whose very business is predicated on being imperceptible until the

thief's work is complete, so it is that the coming of the Son of Man will be "an hour you do not expect" (24:44). Similarly, the story of Noah is evoked to illustrate how the people (bar Noah and his family) did not anticipate the coming flood and went about their normal lives completely oblivious of the soon to ensue calamity. These warnings have a particular resonance to our society's modern experience of the Christmas season – albeit a somewhat paradoxical one.

In one sense, the readings in our contemporary context seem out of place. For the most part, the anticipatory weeks before Christmas cannot be missed. By the time Advent starts, shopping centres are adorned with tinsel, Christmas carols begin to be heard in suburban parks and on the radio, and advertising on all sorts of platforms remind us that we can find that perfect Christmas gift at this or that particular outlet. The readings might indicate that the 'signs of the times' can be easily missed, yet it seems that, at least in much of the world influenced by Western culture, there is no missing the season that is upon us.

Of course, the 'reason for the season', to utilise a well-worn yet pertinent cliché, certainly is easy to miss and it is in this vein that the message of the readings find their resonance. Like the women grinding grain or those "eating and drinking" (Matt 24:38), it is easy to confuse being busy with being aware. Indeed, Christmas is a time where being busy about what might seem appropriate to the season may even hinder our perception of what is actually occurring. For many, the final months of the calendar year and the opening weeks of the liturgical year represent a time of haste and exertion. There is wrapping up the year's affairs to be done; be it school, university or work, or making arrangements for coming holidays and many other things which might occupy our attention this time of year. That is before we even consider the unique position preparing for Christmas itself might entail – finding time to buy gifts, prepare special meals or visiting family being typical examples.

All those things are fine and quite appropriate. If we are fortunate enough to have family and friends to prepare time for, presents to wrap or a place to dress up with Christmas themed decorations; that is indeed a blessed and happy position to be in. Many do not have such an opportunity and it is no small matter that this season can be especially hard for them – so if we are in such a position to engage the season as such, we thank God and do so with joy.

However, the readings do give us a lesson on two related levels. The first is already stated and that is to not get so swept up in the business of Christmas that we miss the important gift that is offered. The second lesson, which directly relates to the first, is to recognise the gravity of the gift. All the readings in their own way

point to the significance of the blessing that is the 'reason for the season'. For example, when the vision of Noah is drawn on, it points to a cosmological event; one that changes the world for ever. Similarly, the first reading speaks of a reign of peace of international proportions. The occasion at hand is no trifle event.

The first Christmas changed the world at its very core; nothing was ever the same. Moreover, it was not a simple event trapped in a point of history. This same living God is encountered in every age and seeks to be amongst us anew. We are reminded that Christmas is the time we celebrate the coming of the Lord God into our world, our history, our place and our lives as we live them today and always. This is no mundane thing!

It is a curious irony that the 'special season' of preparing for Christmas year after year can begin to look much the same once one has done a few. Christmas can indeed look 'ordinary' and, at the same time, it is awfully easy to get so busy and miss the truth of the event all together. However, today's liturgical readings give us due notice, Christmas is special on a level that we can never fully grasp or anticipate. We are well served to be alert to the gift it holds as we prepare for its arrival during Advent.

## Prayer of the Faithful

### Introduction

The psalmist calls us to go rejoicing to the house of the Lord. We are here, we are called and humbly, in this season of Advent, we submit our needs to our Father.

### Petitions

We pray for the Church, especially Pope Francis, as he leads us through turbulent times. May he remain strong and purposeful.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the Church in Australia during the preparations for the Plenary Council. In this listening and discernment stage may we be truly open to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for leaders of all nations that they will seek good advice and support from those who have a true desire for peace and justice.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who are suffering at this moment, especially those who suffer physically, mentally and spiritually, that you will console them through your mercy.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for our Christian brothers and sisters who are persecuted for their faith in other parts of the world. May consideration for their suffering bring to mind how important it is for us to maintain our freedom of religious practice and support others in their struggle.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for ourselves gathered around your altar that the needs of our community and those for whom we promise to pray will be met through your grace and mercy.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those preparing for Christmas who do not know Christ. May Christ become known to them by the love and witness of Christians in our local community.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

## Conclusion

Father, having been fed by your Word, we know in faith that you will hear our prayer and fulfil our needs. We ask this through the power of the Spirit and in the name of Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Music

by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

### CWB

Come, O Jesus, Come, O Lord. J. McAuley/ R. Connolly. 658  
Come O Long Expected Jesus. C. Wesley/H. J. Gauntlett. 657  
The Coming of our Lord. C. Coffin et al./ W. Havergal. 816  
To You, O Lord, I Lift My Soul. M. Haugen. 850  
Wake, Awake for night is flying. J.S. Bach. 853

### GA

Advent Litany. B. Farrell. 279  
Come to set us free. B. Farrell. 277  
Out of Darkness. C. Walker. 504  
Wait For The Lord. Taize. 283  
Wake, O Wake, and Sleep No Longer. J. S. Bach. 282

### AOV1

Come to set us free. B. Farrell. 39  
First Sunday, Advent. C. Smith CFC. 108  
Jesus, Come to Us. D. Haas. 148.  
Out of Darkness. C. Walker. 134

### AOV2

Open the Heavens. B. Boniwell. 163

### AOV4Kids

Christmas is Coming. J. Bell. 55 (Verse 1)  
O Emmanuel. M. Mangan. 52

### Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva

Psalm 121: *Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord.*  
Psalm 121: Marie Kremer/Joseph Gelineau SJ. CWB 172  
Psalm 122: Let Us Go Rejoicing: Christopher Willcock. GA 72  
Psalm 122(121): Jenny O'Brien. JOBA pg. 8  
Let Us Go Rejoicing: Paul Mason. PM pg. 96  
Let Us Go Rejoicing: Marty Haugen. LPA pg. 6

### Music selections by Michael Mangan

**O Emmanuel** (TT/SYJ)/CWBII [Gathering, Communion, Recessional]  
**Come, Lord Jesus, Come** CH & V1 (SYJ/CWBII) [Lighting Advent Wreath]  
**To You, O Lord** (LCC) *Ps 24/25 (Chn's Lectionary)* [Seasonal Psalm]  
**Help Me Know Your Ways** (FWS) *based on Ps 24 (25)*  
**Advent Alleluia** (Vs 1) (TT) [Gospel Acclamation]  
**We Rejoice** (SYJ) *based on Ps 121 (122)* [Gathering, Gifts]  
**Watch Out, Wake Up** (TT/SYJ) [CHILDREN: Gathering, Recessional]  
**We Come, We Come** (TWB) [Communion – esp V3]  
**Waiting for the Child** (TT/SYJ) [Non-Scriptural Reflection]



# 8 December 2019

## Second Sunday of Advent

Reflection by Joe Tedesco

### Introduction

The readings of the Second Sunday of Advent remind us that God's plan for humanity includes freedom from sin and the establishment of a just and harmonious existence. Such a promise is found through true repentance; by turning away from sin and toward God in heart and action.

### Penitential Act

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you are the Lamb of God.  
Lord have mercy.

You draw us into the reign of God.  
Christ have mercy.

You are the one who is to come.  
Lord have mercy.

### First Reading

**Isaiah 11:1-10**

Isaiah provides a messianic vision of a reign of truth and justice. It is a vision of an age where the downtrodden are particularly favoured and of a world free from enmity of any kind.

### Second Reading

**Romans 15:4-9**

St. Paul calls believers to give God glory by living in harmony with each other. Jesus Christ has set the example of this in his welcoming spirit, we are to follow this example.

### Gospel Reading

**Matthew 3:1-12**

The coming ministry of Christ is anticipated by John the Baptist's activity in the wilderness. He preaches that Jesus is the fulfilment of the promises of old. We can prepare for such promises through a sincere and repentant heart.

### Reflection

The link between Advent and the character and message of John the Baptist is typically brought to the fore in the Second Sunday of Advent. In many respects, there is a simple continuation of last week's theme – be prepared for the coming of the Lord. However, the figure of John the Baptist adds a more specific call to repent, to find cleansing in acknowledging sin and to seek God's mercy and forgiveness. There is a simple yet powerful message to heed here. The Lord is coming and there is a sure way to prepare; become aware of our brokenness and turn away from sin which separates us from each other and from our God.

Though John the Baptist appears in all the Gospels, there is an interesting feature that is unique to Matthew's version. It is the only Gospel to identify the Pharisees and Sadducees as the target of John's tirade (Luke 3:7 has a similar warning, but does not specify the target in any particular way). The identification of those character types gives John's words a certain nuance. Both the Pharisees and Sadducees represent the established religious authorities. Though presented as one unit, they would not typically be associated with each other. The Sadducees were part of the established order, they typify those who find comfort in their religiosity as it affords them security, esteem and positions of power and influence. The Pharisees at the time of Jesus did not generally enjoy such socio-political standing, but they were often considered religiously zealous, righteous in the law and keen to uphold the Jewish faith in a rigorous way. Both groups had every reason to consider themselves 'righteous' before the people and before the Lord. Yet it is these very figures that John singles out.

More specifically, John draws attention to the religious figures as, in their own particular ways, they are steeped in the law and prophetic traditions that John himself is expressing. Thus, their religiosity represents a certain irony. They should be the ones most in tune to the special time of redemption that is about to dawn and that John is attesting to. Yet, even as they hear the very proclamation in their midst, they are missing it. The nature of John's words to them is important; the Pharisees and Sadducees are presumptive, resting on their status as 'children of Abraham'. However, this means little in the sight of the Lord who is about to be revealed in the person of Jesus. What is required is fruit – i.e. outworking and substance that is "worthy of repentance" (3:8). The first reading adds to this sense as it prophesies of a spirit of God that judges not on appearances – on what the eyes see and the ears hear but, rather, judges with righteousness, wisdom and understanding.

Though the object of John's warnings are to the ancient religious figures, they are equally presented to the modern reader. We might easily fall into the attitude of the Sadducees, finding self-righteous confidence in our religious standing by virtue of being 'in the club', as it were, as active Christians. Or more generally we may consider ourselves like the Pharisees with access to knowledge of ways 'good' and 'godly', but closed to the deeper dynamic manifestation of such teaching. In this sense, we too might find ourselves being presumptive. This might be especially so as we move through Advent. Our knowledge and attention to the meaning of Christmas in contrast to the commercialised nature of the season around us might fill us with certain self-righteousness.

The call to 'repent' and 'confess sins' thus rests on an awareness that is deeper than it might first seem. Further, an honest appraisal of the self that goes beyond appearances and presumption is not always an easy one. Not only is there the business of life and the plethora of distractions afforded to us in our modern settings, there are more introspective challenges as well. Put simply, it is often difficult to face up to one's own limitations. We often have an expectation of ourselves to meet certain standards, to be a certain sort of person. The general message of society does not always help in this regard either. The world we live in projects successful living to be associated with, among other things, an image of being 'in the right', triumphant and proud.

With that, the challenge is given to us during Advent to examine our lives and face the often hard truth of our brokenness and sin. However, we do so not simply to come to a place of negative self-defeat. Rather, it is to come to recognise that we indeed do need the living God who comes to serve and save all of humanity. We need the visitation of our Lord that Christmas harkens again and again and the self-awareness that true repentance entails is, in that respect, a clearing of space for God. To use John's words, "to make his paths straight" for the One who is coming who "baptises with the Holy Spirit and fire" (Matt 3:3, 11).

With that, we take steps during our Advent journey to humble ourselves. To rest not on appearances and presumption but, rather, on the reality of our true selves invited to meet the true God who, as the Christmas celebration illustrates, enters our humanity offering us healing and hope.

## Prayer of the Faithful

### Introduction

John the Baptist urged the people to prepare for the coming of the kingdom. Hearing the Word helps us to prepare for the coming of Christ at the end of time, and yet, we also need to pray for the needs that we have at this present time.

## Petitions

We pray for the leaders of our Church, especially here in Australia as we move through the Plenary Council stage of listening and discernment. Open the hearts and minds of our leaders to hear the voice of the people.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for leaders of all nations during this time when Christians prepare for Christmas. May they protect those who are Christian and ensure that justice and peace are a reality in their land.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who are suffering at this moment, particularly those in war torn areas of the world. We pray for the women and children who are often the ones who suffer the most. May they be spared from the brutalities of war.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all those who suffer grief and feel it most deeply as they prepare for Christmas. *(Pause)* May those who have died be brought into eternal life and those who remain grieving be given the grace to share their pain with those who love them so that they comfort each other.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for ourselves who are gathered here today at your altar. May we have the grace to live our lives in the particular way that we have been called at this point in time.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

## Conclusion

Father, you hear our needs and know our hearts so we offer this prayer with utter confidence in your love and mercy. We ask this through the power of the Spirit and in the name of Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Music

by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

### CWB

Come, O Jesus, Come, O Lord. J. McAuley/ R. Connolly. 658  
Come, O Long Expected Jesus. C. Wesley/ J. Gauntlett. 657  
O Come, O Come Emmanuel. J. M. Neale et al./ Gregorian Chant Melody. 763  
On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry. J. Chandler/ W. Havergal. 780  
Prepare the Way. B. Boniwell. 794  
The Voice of God. P. Icarus/ W. Greatorex. 835

### GA

O Come, O Come Emmanuel. J. M. Neale et al./ Gregorian Chant Melody. 285  
Prepare the Way. B. Boniwell. 284  
Wait For The Lord. Taize. 283

### AOV1

Jesus, Come To Us. D. Haas. 148  
O Come, O Come Emmanuel. J. M. Neale et al./ Gregorian Chant Melody. 174

#### AOV4Kids

Christmas is Coming. J. Bell. 55 (Verse 2)

Fill Ev'ry Valley Up. M. Mangan. 54

O Emmanuel. M. Mangan. 52

#### Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy

Psalm 71: *Justice shall flourish in his time, and fullness of peace for ever.*

Psalm 71: Noel Ancell. CWB 175

Psalm 72 (71): Jenny O'Brien. JOBA pg. 10

Justice Shall Flourish in His Time: Marty Haugen. LPA pg. 10

#### Music selections by Michael Mangan

**Fill Every Valley** (TT/SYJ) [Gathering, Recessional]

**O Emmanuel** (TT/SYJ/ CWBII) [Gathering, Communion, Recessional]

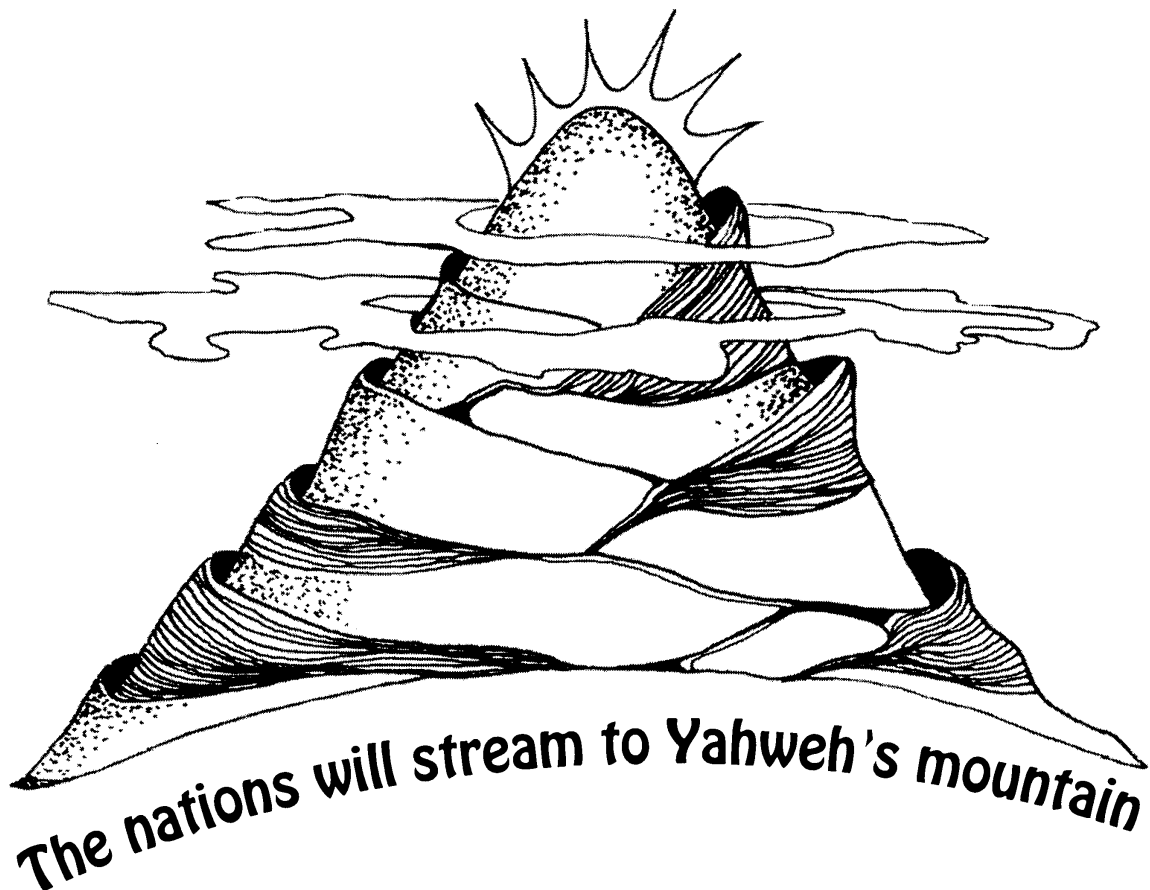
**Come, Lord Jesus, Come** CH & V2 (SYJ/ CWBII) [Lighting Advent Wreath]

**To You, O Lord** (LCC) *Ps 24/25 (Chn's Lectionary)* [Seasonal Psalm]

**Advent Alleluia** (Vs 2) (TT) [Gospel Acclamation]

**We Come, We Come** (TWB) [Communion – esp V3]

**Waiting for the Child** (TT/SYJ) [Non-Scriptural Reflection]





# 9 December 2019

## Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Reflection by Joe Tedesco

### Introduction

Mary represents a key figure in the season of Advent and Christmas, integral to God's design for the salvation of the world. She is presented in the liturgical calendar today with a focus on her conception without original sin – a tradition long held in the Church and celebrated every year during Advent. The mystery of this solemnity is ultimately a joyous one where Mary presents to us a taste of God's gracious intent for all creation and an example on how to respond to such grace.

### Penitential Act

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you came into this world born of a woman.  
Lord have mercy.

You show us God's plan for the world.  
Christ have mercy.

You teach us to rejoice in the Father's love.  
Lord have mercy.

### First Reading

#### Genesis 3:9–15, 20

This foundational text from the Hebrew Scriptures reminds us of the consequences of original sin that can seem all too familiar; disharmony, dishonesty and blame shifting all feature as effects of choosing against God.

### Second Reading

#### Ephesians 1:3–6, 11–12

We are reminded that God does not intend for humanity to be bound to sin and disconnected from God's self. Though we share in the inheritance of original sin that is borne by all people, we also find salvation from it in our inheritance in Christ.

### Gospel Reading

#### Luke 1:26–38

Mary is a key figure in Luke's Gospel and we see her come to the fore in this reading. She is encouraged by the angel Gabriel to respond to the invitation of the Lord – to participate in a special way in the saving activity of God. Her response and declared favour with God illustrates her implicit graciousness, especially blessed by God from her very beginning to be the bearer of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### Reflection

Clearly the culminating focal point of Advent is Christmas and the central figure of Christmas is the Christ Child Jesus. There are, however, other important figures that are celebrated in the season of Advent. In the Sunday liturgy that precedes the solemnity celebrated today we see the figure of John the Baptist. Celebrated every 8th of December (or the day after if the 8th is a Sunday as it is this year) we find another in the form of Mary the Mother of Jesus. Her presence reminds us that the breaking in of God into our world does not happen despite us but, rather, works with the cooperation of faithful people able to respond to God's invitation.

In Mary's case, it is well noted that she is the one through whom the Saviour comes into the world and is only possible because of her humble and faithful 'yes' to God. It is worth pondering Mary's response as presented in today's Gospel.

Before doing so, however, it is fitting to draw on the central tenet of the Immaculate Conception of Mary. In simple terms it calls Catholics to reflect on the special grace afforded to Mary of being free from original sin. The first reading lays the background to this teaching by reminding us that all creation, created good and harmonious by a good and loving God, is scarred by the free choice of human beings who choose against God and against God's intended goodness. That humanity carries this fundamental failing that perpetuates itself from age to age is what we call original sin. It binds us to confuse the true good with the appearance of it and, like the figures of Adam and Eve in the first reading, even with all the good things available to us, we still can find a way to choose against it.

Being bound to such sin means that we will always remain, in some way, separated from God. It is this which Jesus came to heal, and through our Baptism we not only join the community of faithful, we also receive the grace of Jesus' saving action such that we too can journey towards the fullness of life that original sin robs us of. Mary is, in this sense, afforded a special grace of receiving in advance this saving event. She is the living embodiment of Jesus' dying and rising prepared in advance.

Holding that in view, it is interesting to reflect on how Mary handles the events depicted in the Gospel reading. When confronted by the angel Gabriel her first reaction is telling, she is 'disturbed' (1:29); perplexed or deeply troubled are other common translations of the Greek *diatarassé*. What specifically troubles Mary is not overtly clear, however, what can be understood from here and elsewhere in scripture is that Mary's special status as being conceived without original sin does not preclude her from

perplexity and subsequent questioning – recall, for example, Mary’s first words to Gabriel in the Gospel scene, “how can this be” (v. 34).

All of Mary’s special favour from God does not come with any special knowledge. Rather, Mary is given opportunity to ponder (cf. v. 29b) and respond to the saving event of God’s visitation. It is an invitation that requires a fundamental act of faith, to accept God’s will and God’s plan even without completely understanding the fullness of its fruition. The invitation is to respond in faith, not in assured certainty. Of course, Mary does respond in faith and, in so doing, becomes the bearer of the Incarnation into the world. As such, through Mary’s honest yet faithful response to God she came to fully embrace the sinless life that she was given.

The second reading reminds us that we too have access to the inheritance of being ‘blameless before God’ (Eph 1:4) through our adoption as children of God in Jesus Christ. We too can find freedom from sin in our Baptism and obedient faith to Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, there is also certain realism in the figure of Mary that we can reflect on. Like her, the promise of salvation does not automatically mean we ‘know’ all the ways of God. We can only follow Mary, the exemplar for all believers, and ponder, question and hope. In the process we can also give our ‘yes’ to God not because we can fully ‘know’ of God’s ways and God’s plan, but because we are willing to learn, trust and believe.

## Prayer of the Faithful

### Introduction

As we celebrate this feast of Mary, we know that the love of God has been expressed through the Incarnation – God becoming one in our humanity. In confidence then, let us offer our needs to God.

### Petitions

We pray for the leaders of our Church that they will follow the example of Mary as a faith filled and humble disciple.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for our Church in Australia as we move towards our Plenary Council in this time of listening and discernment, that our leaders will hear the voice of the people and act on it with courage and humility.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the leaders of the world that they will seek to govern justly so that we enjoy peace.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who are suffering in our community. Heal their minds and bodies through the care and expertise of those who can help in a positive way.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who have no knowledge of the love of God. May their lives be enriched by the love of family and friends.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for ourselves gathered around your altar that we not lose sight of your coming in glory and your coming at Christmas. Help us to focus on Christ in this time if Advent.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

### Conclusion

Following Mary, the first disciple, we know that what we ask of you will be granted in your loving kindness. We ask this through the power of the Spirit and in the name of Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### Music

by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

#### CWB

Hail Queen of Heaven. H. Hemy. 702

Holy Virgin, By God’s Decree. P. Deca/J.P. Lecot, W. R. Lawrence. 714

Immaculate Mary, We Praise God In You. B. Foley/ Lourdes Melody. 723

Joy to You, O Virgin Mary. L. Deiss CSSp. 729

Mary Immaculate, Star of the Morning. M. Trainor. 744

O Purest of Creatures. F. W. Faber. 775

Sing of Mary, Pure and Lowly. R. F. Palmer. 808

The Angel Gabriel From Heaven Came. Basque Carol. 815

#### GA

Hail Mary: Gentle Woman. C. Landry. 544

Hail Queen of Heaven. H. Hemy. 546

Immaculate Mary, We Praise God In You. B. Foley/ Lourdes Melody. 549

Magnificat (Tell out My Soul). T. Dudley Smith/ W. Greatorex. 550

My Soul Rejoices. O. Alstott. 250

There is Nothing Told. C. Willcock SJ. 548

#### AOV1

O Holy Mary. O. Alstott. 141

#### Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva

Psalm 97: *Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done wonderful deeds.*

Psalm 97: Anthony Briggs. CWB 472

Psalm 98: All the Ends of the Earth: David Haas/Marty Haugen. GA 57

Psalm 98 (97): Jenny O’Brien. JOBF pg. 59

Sing to the Lord a New Song: Marty Haugen and David Haas.

LPSF pg. 126

#### Music selections by Michael Mangan

**Sing New Songs of Joy** (FWS/ CWBII) *based on Ps 97 (98)*

**Mary Said Yes** (TT/SYJ) [CHILDREN: Gathering, Recessional]

**My Spirit Sings** (FWS/SYJ/ CWBII) *Magnificat*

**Mary’s Song of Praise** (DOM) *Magnificat*

**Waiting for the Child** (TT/SYJ) [Non-Scriptural Reflection]





# 15 December 2019

## Third Sunday of Advent

Reflection by Joe Tedesco

### Introduction

The Third Sunday of Advent calls Christians to endure the journey, to have patience as we wait on the coming of the Lord. This is framed in a declaration of the nature of God's action which draws life where there appears none, that gives the light of hope where there is darkness.

### Penitential Act

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you became flesh.  
Lord have mercy.

You offer us salvation.  
Christ have mercy.

You lead us rejoicing to the Father.  
Lord have mercy.

### First Reading

#### Isaiah 35:1–6a, 10

Isaiah speaks to the people of Israel who long for the messianic age where God's reign is restored. He tells them of life that will abound where they see none. What appears desert and lifeless is but a bountiful garden waiting to bloom.

### Second Reading

#### James 5:7–10

James also uses horticultural imagery to encourage believers to be patient as they wait for the fullness of life. They are also encouraged to live in a manner worthy of their expectant faith.

### Gospel Reading

#### Matthew 11:2–11

John the Baptist seeks assurance that Jesus is the expectant salvific figure that John himself prophesied. The Lord responds to John's enquiry by pointing to the works he is doing. Jesus also reminds people to not let presupposition cloud their vision of where God's activity can be found.

### Reflection

Though there are many singular feast days and events throughout the Christian calendar, the elongated nature of Advent not only encourages people to prepare for the particular highpoint of Christmas, but is also a reminder that the Christian life, life in general for that matter, is a journey. We are always a pilgrim church, in motion, moving, growing and becoming.

The challenge of being 'on a journey' is captured in the readings used in today's Liturgy of the Word. The journey of life and especially the life of the Christian disciple requires courage and persistence. The second reading expresses this fairly simply: "Be patient ... until the coming of the Lord" (James 5:7). We have a foretaste of all that is before us (see Rom 8:23-25), but right now, where we sit requires patience and perseverance as the fullness of God's presence lies over the horizon.

The agricultural imagery used in the second reading is apt here. The seed placed in the ground becomes invisible, lost in the soil and all that remains is hope that it will sprout into fruitful life. The language of James of the "precious crop" captures this well – our goal and hope in Christ is indeed precious, but we cannot have it in an instant. It requires not simply rain, but "autumn and spring rains" (lit: early and late rains from the original Greek). It requires the seasons to pass through, for the constant ongoing blessing of God to fall in right time and to, thus, draw the seed to fullness of life.

Famous horticulturist and author Gertrude Jekyll wrote on cultivating gardens as such: "A garden is a grand teacher. It teaches patience and careful watchfulness; it teaches industry and thrift; above all it teaches entire trust." Trust, a synonym of faith, is what we need for the journey. This is especially so because the journey of life can find ourselves in challenging places of darkness and doubt. We can find ourselves relating not so much to the gardener or farmer but, rather, to the seed itself; buried by dirt, hidden from the light, seemingly distant from the promises of God.

Turning to the Gospel, it is hard to tell the full inner mind of John the Baptist in the scene depicted. His faithfulness to the prophetic call placed on his life has seen him end up in his own place of darkness, that of Herod's prison. Yet he hears of Jesus and, perhaps out of desperation but certainly with hope, he sends out a message to ask if Jesus is the expected one.

John's question, "are you the one" (11:3) is one that echoes through the ages and is asked again and again. Are you, Jesus, the one we wait for? Are you, Jesus, the one who gives our journey of life meaning? Are you the one who both calls and aids us on this

sometimes difficult trek called life? The question may seem disingenuous in many respects. We know the story, we know the theology – God sent his Son, Jesus Christ, into the world so that we might live. “The fullness of time has come”, as it states in Galatians, “God sent his Son, born of a woman” (Gal 4:4), we don’t have to expect another. Yet, this journey can at times seem long and hard and, like John the Baptist, we feel pressed to express that longing and put the question to our God.

We do well to listen to the answer too. Jesus does not answer with a simple yes or no. Rather, Jesus draws on Scripture and responds by pointing to his healing work; Jesus’ identity is revealed in the encounters of those around him where the sick and needy receive healing and good news.

Of note, John does not experience such things himself. He remains in prison, yet his hope has come. It is a strange paradox in some respects; John’s hope is indeed present, but it is received in the darkest of places where he remains. It is quite fitting that Jesus adds to his announcement the line “blessed is anyone that does not lose faith in me” (Matt 11:6). Stated as such in the Lectionary translation, the key word *skandaliz* means not so much ‘lose faith’ (though this may be a risk), but is more like ‘take offence’ (as it is more commonly translated) or ‘feel abandoned by’.

The inference is clear; both the expectation of what we may think the Messiah should be and the places where we might hear it may leave us disheartened. What are we to do? The answer, to use Jekyll’s lesson, is to trust entirely. It is all we can do and the only sure way to complete the journey, to reach the goal and find the fullness of life in Christ at the end of it all. Even when all seems lost and dead, we can reflect on the words from Isaiah; “the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom” (35:1-2). Even that which appears lifeless will come alive in Christ.

## Prayer of the Faithful

### Introduction

In the readings today we hear of the works of God directed to the poor and needy. As we wait for Jesus to come in glory, let us ask God to answer our needs and those of the poor.

### Petitions

We pray for the leaders of the Church that they may zealously bring the good news of Jesus Christ to the weary and faint hearted.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the Church in Australia during the preparations for the Plenary Council. In this listening and discernment stage may we be truly open to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all world leaders, especially for the government of Australia, that the leaders may strive to protect the dignity of the human person.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who suffer throughout the world, particularly those living with a physical disability that they may have the grace to lean on Christ.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all those who travel at Christmas to be with their families. May this journey be safe and may it be a special time expressed through love and generosity to one another.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

## Conclusion

Father, you who are ever faithful to your promises, accept this prayer and those that are still in our hearts and grant them according to your will. We make our prayer through the Spirit in the name of Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Music

by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

### CWB

Come, O Long Expected Jesus. C. Wesley/ J. Gauntlett. 657  
O Come, O Come Emmanuel. J. M. Neale et al./ Gregorian Chant Melody. 763  
On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry. J. Chandler/ W. Havergal. 780  
Rejoice The Lord Is King! C. Wesley/ J. Darwall. 799  
The Voice of God. P. Icarus/ W. Greatorex. 835

### GA

Come to set us free. B. Farrell. 277  
Now in this Banquet. M. Haugen. 197 (Advent Refrain)  
O Come, O Come Emmanuel. J. M. Neale et. al./ Gregorian Chant Melody. Chant. 285  
Out of Darkness. C. Walker. 504  
The Voice of God. P. Icarus/ W. Greatorex. 476  
Wait For The Lord. Taize. 283.

### AOV1

Come to set us free. B. Farrell. 39  
Let Heaven Rejoice. R. Dufford SJ. 124  
O Come, O Come Emmanuel. J. M. Neale et. al./ Gregorian Chant Melody. Chant. 174  
Out of Darkness. C. Walker. 134

### AOV4Kids

Christmas is Coming. J. Bell. 55 (Verse 3)  
Fill Ev’ry Valley Up. M. Mangan. 54  
O Emmanuel. M. Mangan. 52  
Rejoice in the Lord Always. Traditional. 75

### Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy

Psalms 145: *Lord, come and save us.*  
Psalms 145: Percy Jones. CWB 178  
Psalms 146: Praise the Lord/Lord, Come and Save Us: Noel Ansell. GA 83  
Psalms 146(145): Jenny O’Brien. JOBA pg. 12  
Lord, Come and Save Us: Marty Haugen. LPA pg. 13

**Music Selection by Michael Mangan**

**We Rejoice** (SYJ) *based on Ps 121 (122)*

**Fill Every Valley** (TT) [Gathering, Recessional]

**O Emmanuel** (TT/SYJ/ CWBI) [Gathering, Communion, Recessional]

**Come, Lord Jesus, Come** CH & V2 (SYJ/ CWBI) [Lighting  
Advent Wreath]

**To You, O Lord** (LCC) Ps 24/25 (*Chn's Lectionary*) [Seasonal Psalm]

**Advent Alleluia** (Vs 3) (TT) [Gospel Acclamation]

**We Come, We Come** (TWB) [Communion – esp V3]

**One Body In Christ** (TWB) [Communion – esp V2]

**Waiting for the Child** (TT/SYJ) [Non-Scriptural Reflection]



**BE PATIENT**



# 22 December 2019

## Fourth Sunday of Advent

Reflection by Joe Tedesco

### Introduction

The promise of God's breaking into creation is coming as a child born of a young woman. A humble and vulnerable child, from the line of David and ordained by the Lord God for the salvation for all people will enter the world through the faithfulness of a mother and her husband.

### Penitential Act

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you became fully human to save us all.  
Lord have mercy.

You are the one whom the prophets foretold.  
Christ have mercy.

You bring salvation to all nations.  
Lord have mercy.

### First Reading

#### Isaiah 7:10–14

The reading from Isaiah shows God responding to the fears of Ahaz, leader of Judah at the time. The people of God need not lose hope, they can trust the Lord and a sign will be given; that of a young woman with child, the child will be named Emmanuel, God-with-us.

### Second Reading

#### Romans 1:1–7

Paul proclaims that the promises of God found in the Hebrew Scriptures have come to fruition in the person of Jesus Christ. The Christ which finds its humanity in the line of David is declared the Son of God and has now become the one who draws all people to God's self.

### Gospel Reading

#### Matthew 1:18–24

Matthew, ever mindful of the Jewish heritage to which his audience belongs, draws on the imagery of Isaiah to proclaim the truth of Jesus Christ as the one who is Emmanuel, God-with-us. Matthew also highlights that Jesus is very much bound to the human story; the story of Joseph and Mary as they begin to form their human family in unusual yet blessed circumstances.

### Reflection

Advent obviously draws into focus God coming to save humanity by fully entering its reality in the person of Jesus Christ. Importantly, we see in the readings used throughout the season other key figures. John the Baptist is one that features in two of the four Gospels in Advent. We also have various solemnities that feature Mary the mother of Jesus. Today we see another figure in the form of Joseph. Before we reflect on any specifics of today's readings, we recognize that these various figures (and others) matter. God's saving intent for the world is mediated through human beings; people of prophetic awareness like John, a women of grace and great faith such as Mary and, today, we see Joseph singled out as a "man of honour" (8:19).

All those figures mentioned provide examples for followers of Christ. Joseph's example is interesting because his honour takes the shape of balancing two important dimensions. The Gospel reading makes the point that because Joseph was a man of honour, he is keen to maintain the moral norms of the day as drawn from the Torah. This required cancelling the betrothal and returning Mary to her father's household. Scholars tell us that the death penalty stipulated in the Law (Deut 22:23-27) as suitable punishment for one in Mary's perceived situation was likely no longer practiced in first century Palestine, nevertheless, the penalty that could be afforded was still humiliating and bleak. Joseph, being aware of this, in his intended action combined respect for the Law with compassion for Mary by making sure that she would be dismissed without public knowledge.

Following this, and perhaps because of Joseph's character, he is able to hear the message of the Lord and, then, ultimately participate in it. It is all this that expresses what it means to be a person of honour and provides a layering of disposition that is worth highlighting.

Honour is a slippery notion to grasp. One might think it is to do one's duty no matter what, to maintain regulations and commandments regardless of personal cost. It may also mean being merciful and gracious, withholding conviction even when one has every right to enact it. Honour, particularly in the theological context, may also mean being able to respond to the dynamic unpredictable movement of God, able to accept in faith what might seem new, different and perhaps even counterintuitive. In today's brief Gospel narrative we see all these notions acting in concert. Joseph starts with the Law, imbues it with mercy and kindness then is able to hear the Spirit of God moving him to engage in the work of the Lord that might otherwise seem impossible.

We too can be encouraged to follow these traits; to remain true to our Christian teaching and heritage, employ it not inflexibly and harshly but, rather, with mercy and love. We then pray we can hear the Spirit in our hearts and then cooperate with God in his saving activity in the world.

All this requires many things, but high on the list is another virtue featured in the Gospel reading – courage. The angel that appears to Joseph in his dream, mirroring the words of Gabriel to Mary that appear in the Gospel of Luke (1:30), tells Joseph to not be afraid. Fear is often what holds us back from responding well to difficult situation such as the one Joseph found himself in. It can also hold us back from the promptings of God. Fear of the unknown, fear of losing face, fear of being ‘in the wrong’ or simply fear of encountering God in such a strange way ... there are any number of fears that Joseph may have encountered and we, likewise, face in our lives at certain times.

We need not be afraid. As Paul declares in the second reading, through the Lord Jesus we have received grace and apostleship, and we belong to Christ. We are not alone and we need not strive to be people of honour in the mode of Joseph by our own strength and in isolation. With the feast of Christmas itself so near, we hear the proclamation of what it all means; Emmanuel, God-with-us. Not simply God on our side, God intending good for us or God encouraging us from afar; rather, God amongst and with us in our midst.

True, the ‘God-with-us’ is not always easy to see. As both the first reading and the Gospel point out, it is conceived, a child in a womb, a fragile promise easily missed. Yet, that is the heart of our faith, that our God is one amongst us, in us and for us. Thus, we need not be afraid and we pray to be people of honour like Joseph; able to take our place in making God’s saving activity a reality in our lives and in the world we live in.

## Prayer of the Faithful

### Introduction

As we prepare to celebrate the Nativity of Jesus, let us offer our prayers and needs to God through the power of the Holy Spirit in Christ.

### Petitions

We pray for the Church in Australia during the preparations for the Plenary Council. In this listening and discernment stage may we be truly open to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the leaders of our world that they respect all religious traditions and allow all Christians freedom to celebrate the coming of Christ.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for families, particularly as they celebrate the coming of your Son at Christmas. Give them a sense of togetherness and hope especially if these are difficult times for them.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those experiencing discrimination and hardship. May our actions support them in their need and help them to know that when Christ comes again justice will reign through all creation.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for nations divided by conflict that through the power of the Holy Spirit compassion and understanding will triumph over injustice.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who do not know Christ that they will come to know his presence in the world through the love that Christians are called to show for all peoples.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

## Conclusion

Father, you sent your Son and the Holy Spirit to change our world. Hear this prayer for those in need as we work to unite your earthly family. We make our prayer through the power of the Spirit, in the name of your Son, Jesus. **Amen.**

## Music

by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

### CWB

Come, O Long Expected Jesus. C. Wesley/ J. Gauntlett. 657

Holy Virgin, By God’s Decree. P. Deca/J.P. Lecot, W. R. Lawrence. 714

Immaculate Mary, We Praise God In You. B. Foley/ Lourdes Melody. 723

Joy to You, O Virgin Mary. L. Deiss CSSp. 729

O Come, O Come Emmanuel. J. M. Neale et. al./ Gregorian Chant Melody. 763

The Angel Gabriel From Heaven Came. Basque Carol. 815

Canticle of Zechariah. R. Kreuz. 607

Canticle of Zechariah. J. Quinn SJ/ David C. Isele. 637

### GA

Benedictus. R. Duck/ M. Haugen. 5

Hail Mary: Gentle Woman. C. Landry. 544

I Say “Yes,” My Lord. D. Penna. 445

Immaculate Mary, We Praise God In You. B. Foley/ Lourdes Melody. 723

My Soul Rejoices. O. Alstott. 250

O Come, O Come Emmanuel. J. M. Neale et. al./ Gregorian Chant Melody. 285

Tell out My Soul. T. Dudley- Smith/ W. Greatorex. 550

### AOV1

I Say “Yes,” My Lord. D. Penna. 155

O Come, O Come Emmanuel. J. M. Neale et. al./ Gregorian Chant Melody. 174.

O Holy Mary. O. Alstott. 141

### AOV2

Open the Heavens. B. Boniwell. 163

#### AOV4Kids

Christmas is Coming. J. Bell. 55 (Verse 4)

Like Mary. G. Holmes. 53

O Emmanuel. M. Mangan. 52

#### Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy

Psalm 23: *Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.*

Psalm 23: Dan Smith/Stephen Somerville. CWB 181

Psalm 24 (23): Jenny O'Brien. JOBA pg. 14

Let the Lord Enter: Tony Alonso. LPA pg. 16

#### Music selection by Michael Mangan

**O Emmanuel** (TT/SYJ/ CWBII) [Gathering, Communion, Recessional]

**Come, Lord Jesus, Come CH & V2 (SYJ/ CWBII) [Lighting Advent Wreath]**

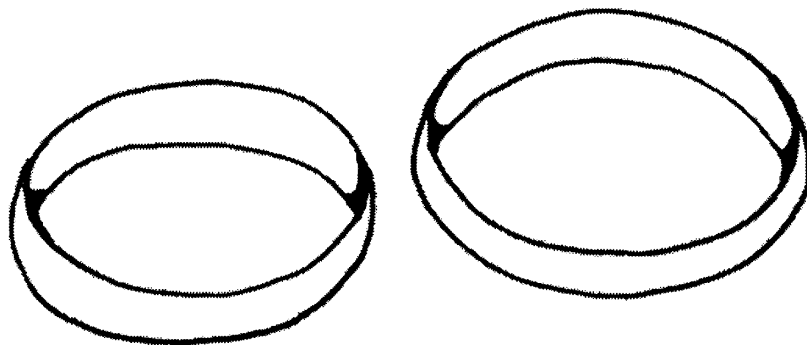
**To You, O Lord** (LCC) *Ps 24/25 (Chn's Lectionary)* [Seasonal Psalm]

**Advent Alleluia** (*Vs 4*) (TT) [Gospel Acclamation]

**Mary Said Yes** (TT) [CHILDREN: Gathering, Recessional]

**We Come, We Come** (TWB) [Communion – esp V3]

**Waiting for the Child** (TT/SYJ) [Non-Scriptural Reflection]



**His mother Mary was  
betrothed to Joseph.**



# 24 December 2019

## The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) Vigil

Reflection by Joe Tedesco

### Introduction

The Vigil Mass of Christmas is the nexus between Advent and the events of Christmas itself which features the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The readings speak of the imminent fruition of God's plan from the beginning of time and its culmination is indeed a time of great joy.

### Penitential Act

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you come in flesh from the Father.  
Lord have mercy.

You were born of the Virgin Mary.  
Christ have mercy.

You take us to the Father.  
Lord have mercy.

### First Reading

**Isaiah 62:1-5**

God wishes to give his people a new name. They are not to be identified as barren, lost and alone. God gives them a new identity by joining with them in deep intimacy and, in so doing God's joy is made manifest.

### Second Reading

**Acts 13:16-17, 22-25**

Paul presents a brief survey of how Jesus is the crowning point of the Lord's dealing with Israel. We are invited to not only recognise the event of Christ's arrival, but the history of God's activity as it has led to that point.

### Gospel Reading

**Matthew 1:1-25 or Matthew 1:18-25**

The opening of Matthew's gospel reminds readers of the deep history that rests behind the figure of Jesus Christ. It traces its way through multiple generations that include figures of both great faith and failing. Its end point is at the birth of Jesus to the Virgin Mary. This is how God came to be Emmanuel; God-with-us.

### Reflection

The Gospel reading's place in the Christmas Vigil liturgy is peculiar, particularly so when the Church is in the Year A cycle. The short form of the Gospel, the one commonly read at masses in the Australian context, is basically identical to the one used the previous Sunday (the Fourth Sunday of Advent). Its repetition can seem superfluous. On the other hand, its reiteration underlines the festive moment that is imminent – God is with us. The name Emmanuel captures this reality.

That said, there is also a longer version assigned to today's liturgy that includes the detailed genealogy of Jesus which is worthwhile to reflect on. As noted a number of times through the Advent season, the coming of our Lord on the night of the first Christmas is facilitated through the participation and cooperation of other significant figures – key among them included John the Baptist, Joseph and Mary the mother of Jesus. The genealogy, in many respects, underlines this dimension of God's saving activity. God's offer of salvation does not impose itself as some unfamiliar self-contained entity onto creation. Rather, Christ comes into the world as part of a family that is part of a community that is part of a tradition and that is linked quite genuinely to a living ancestry. As the second reading underscores with its summing history of salvation, God has always worked through the people of God and Christ is the culmination of this.

With this, we are reminded yet again of how God works; in and through our human experience and, in particular, our relationships. It is a reminder that we do well to look after our vital human relationships; our families, our community and our heritage and traditions. It is perhaps a fitting thing that one of the enduring vestiges of traditional Christmas celebrations that remains in place despite a decline in religious activity more generally speaking is the gathering of family and friends around this time of year. Long may that continue.

Returning to the scriptures themselves, the relational dimension is also at play in the first reading. In this evocative text from Isaiah we see expressed the joyous saving activity of God in intimate terms; like young people falling in love and becoming bonded to each other in marriage, so it is with God who finds delight in his people who he saves.

The verses of Isaiah are particularly poignant because they express not so much the joy of those being saved by God, but the joy of God's self in delivering the people from desolation. It is a twist on the notion of the joy of the season that is worth pondering.

Indeed, joy is commonly associated with Christmas. A well-known Christmas carol often sung at this time is Joy to the World. Originally composed by Isaac Watts in 1719 and inspired by Psalm 98, it sings of the delight that we can find in the magnificent mystery of Christmas. The reading from Isaiah invites an added layer to such a sentiment. This joy we are encouraged to proclaim is not our own as such, at least it need not only be. Rather, God has come to be amongst us, in our midst, our communities and our places of connection and meaning. God joins us for our salvation and, to draw on our first reading, to share God's own joy with us. It is a joy that surpasses all understanding, which can last through any travail and will be for all time. In the mysterious events of the first Christmas, this joy is made available to us all.

In all this, there is implied a certain responsibility. As the readings attest, God has worked through human beings to make his saving action a reality. God continues to work through us as individuals and as the living community of Christ to be bearers of God's joy.

In many respects, the Gospel reading looks back at the long line of succession that precedes Jesus' birth. However, this story continues and goes forward as well. We are adopted sons and daughters of God the Father (c.f. Gal 4:3-7). In a certain sense, we now form a continuation of the line laid out in Matthew and inferred in the second reading taken from Acts. The wonderful joy of God comes to us this Christmas night, however, it is but a starting point. Being God's joy, it wishes to burst out and find its way into the hearts of all – especially those who most need it.

It is, thus, quite fitting that Watts includes in his famous carol the line "let heaven and nature sing." Not one or the other, but both together. Through Christ, who we celebrate the arrival of this night, we can find lasting happiness that stretches from heaven to earth, from the transcendent to the mundane, from eternal life to the mortal one we experience in the here and now. This is not a joy for some at some times, this is a joy for all time and for all people. May we receive it anew and share it generously this Christmas.

## Prayer of the Faithful

### Introduction

As we celebrate the coming of Jesus who leads us towards the Kingdom, let us offer the needs of our world and our community to our merciful Father.

### Petitions

We pray for the Church, sustain us so that we may continue to be the visible presence of faith, hope and charity in the world.

*(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.*

We pray for the Church in Australia during the preparations for the Plenary Council. In this listening and discernment stage may we be truly open to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

*(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.*

We pray for our government leaders, that guided by the Holy Spirit they will meet the needs of the wider community and always allow freedom of worship.

*(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.*

We pray for this assembly, that we may trust in the Holy Spirit and bear witness to your glory through our celebrations of the Lord's coming as a baby in Bethlehem.

*(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.*

We pray for those without shelter or security, may they find generosity and kindness in the hearts of your people.

*(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.*

We pray for all those who cannot be with us to celebrate Christmas: our family members who have died, those who are travelling, those who are suffering illness. May our prayers for peace blend with theirs.

*(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.*

## Conclusion

Father, you sent your Son to bring Salvation to all humankind. We acknowledge your love and offer these prayers to you with trust and confidence through the power of the Spirit and in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

## Music

by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

### CWB

Angels We Have Heard on High. French Carol. 622  
Good Christians All, Rejoice. J. Mason Neale/ German Melody. 697  
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing. C. Wesley/ F. Mendelssohn. 704  
Joy to the World. I. Watts/ G. F. Handel. 728  
O Come all Ye Faithful. J. Wade. 760 (Verses 1-3)  
O Little Town of Bethlehem. P. Brooks/ English melody. 772  
Of The Father's Love Begotten. J. Mason Neale et al. 779  
Once in Royal David's City. H. Gauntlett/ C. F. Alexander. 782  
The First Nowell. English text and melody. 822 (Verses 1, 2, 4 & 6)  
Unto us a Boy Is Born. P. Dearmer/ Piae Cantiones. 849

### GA

Angels We Have Heard on High. French Carol. 286  
Away in A Manger. J. McFarland/ W. Kirkpatrick. 289  
Child of Mercy. D. Haas. 292  
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing. C. Wesley/ F. Mendelssohn. 294  
Joy to the World. I. Watts/ G. F. Handel. 295  
O Come all Ye Faithful. J. Wade. 760 (Verses 1-3)  
O Little Town of Bethlehem. P. Brooks/ L. Redner. 296  
Once in Royal David's City. H. Gauntlett/ C. F. Alexander. 297  
The First Nowell. English text and melody. 298 (Verses 1, 2, 4 & 6)

### AOV1

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing. C. Wesley/ F. Mendelssohn. 171  
Joy to the World. I. Watts/ G. F. Handel. 170  
O Come all Ye Faithful. J. Wade. 167 (Verses 1-2)  
The First Nowell. English text and melody. 169 (Verses 1, 2 & 5)  
What Child Is This. W. C. Dix/ English melody. 165 (Verses 1-2)

### AOV2

Angels We Have Heard on High. French Carol. 140  
Sing We, Sing We Noel. K. Poelker. 124



#### AOV4Kids

And Did You See Him Little Star. C. Gibson/ H. Clyde. 60

Out on the Road to Bethlehem. M. Nicol. 61

Baby Lying in a Manger. P. Combe. 63

Can This Really Be True? L. Newton/ T. Wittwer. 64

#### Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy

Psalm 88: *For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.*

Psalm 88: Stephen Somerville/Christopher Willcock SJ. CWB 385

Psalm 89: I Will Sing for Ever: Roger Heagney. GA 50

Psalm 89 (88): Jenny O'Brien. JOBA pg. 16

Forever I Will Sing: Tony Alonso. LPSF pg. 6

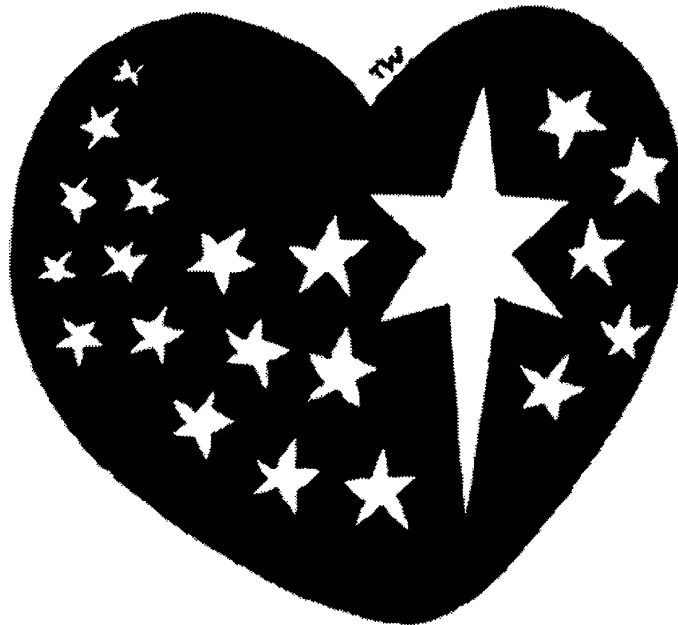
#### Music selection by Michael Mangan

**Glory to God** (TT/SYJ) [Gathering, Recessional]

**Glory, Gloria** (STAR) [CHILDREN, Gathering, Recessional]

**There Is A Child** (TT/SYJ) *based on Is 9:1-7*

**This Little Boy** (TT/SYJ) [Non-Scriptural Reflection]



Open our hearts  
to receive  
Christ's light.



# 25 December 2019

## The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) Midnight Mass

Reflection by Gerard Moore

### Introduction

The Mass itself and its readings present us with a series of contrasts. The Mass is a celebration of the in breaking of the light, set in the midst of the darkness of night. In the reading from the prophet, the new born child is a symbol of peace over against injustice and violence. The Letter to Titus sets justice and devotion over and against godlessness and intemperate behaviour. The Gospel sees the Emperor Augustus trying to know the population through the counting of its numbers. But it is the shepherds who attain the real knowledge of salvation. The birth of the Messiah.

### Penitential Act

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you are the revelation of God.  
Lord have mercy.

You came to bring peace to the world.  
Christ have mercy.

You free us from all selfishness to live anew.  
Lord have mercy.

### First Reading

#### Isaiah 9:1-7

This The prophet offers us a compelling vision of peace, set around the birth of the child.

### Second Reading

#### Titus 2:14-19

As we hear the reading from the Letter to Titus we open onto the actions of God, who takes the initiative to bring us to justice and devotion.

### Gospel Reading

#### Luke 2:1-14

Our Gospel for this Mass sets the humble circumstances of Jesus' birth within the larger movement of a census organized by the human Emperor understood as 'divine'. Yet it is the shepherds, those who follow in the steps of David the shepherd, who are the first to come to know the definitive manifestation as human of God on earth.

### Reflection

Leaving the Gospel aside for a moment, our attention is drawn to the singular message in the first two readings. They offer a way to interpret the Gospel passage for a liturgical reading of the Christmas message.

The prophet Isaiah gives us a reason where the focus is on peace, and the backdrop is the language of war and violence. There is gloom, battle soiled gear fuelling fires, smashed weapons. The response is a child destined for a reign of peace. The contrast is drawn strongly, with light shining in darkness and gloom giving way to joy and happiness. The peace is not a soft option. It emerges from victory, heroic action, strong counsel, and justice. It is a persistent peace, a vast peace, a confirmed and sustained peace. It is also a zealous peace: the Lord of hosts is full of zeal in pursuing this peace and ruling this dominion. In the midst of all these is the key contrast for our feast. The focal point is an infant – a child born to us.

The reading from Titus establishes the setting: it is God who is acting, it is the grace of God that has appeared. The war footing of the reading from the prophet is replaced with a sense of devotion and religiosity. The contrast is between the pairing of godlessness and intemperate desires and the pairing of justice and devotion. As in the text from Isaiah, there is a sense of the present – God has appeared. And of the future fulfillment – we await the blessed hope.

The Gospel reading from Luke also is replete with contrasts. The first of its two parts places the young and poor family within the context of a worldwide political event, an imperial census. The will of the powerful Augustus, and the disruption it causes, is felt by the smallest family. The husband and pregnant wife are forced into travel, and the child is born in a stable because there is no accommodation. Yet there is a code in the geography. Far flung Galilee, and its minor village Nazareth, are now linked to Bethlehem, the Davidic town. There is a tension inherent here. Even as the divine emperor at the centre of the empire counts his subjects, a truly royal and truly divine child is born in an unremarkable city in a far-flung place.

The contrast continues in the second section of the passage. The glorious angels single out the uncouth and mistrusted shepherds to convey the message. Yet the shepherds are a reminder of the young David, born in Bethlehem where he was a herder of sheep before becoming a king who shepherded his people. The decree of Caesar Augustus may be heard by governors across the world, while the announcement of the angels is carried only to keepers of flocks. These shepherds hear the announcement that salvation has come, that an heir to the throne of David has been born, and peace is now manifest.

Perhaps one of the challenges that this set of readings presents to us is to identify the contrasts in our own lives and communities, contrasts that match those in the texts. In the light of the birth of the infant, how do we as Christians take up the role of the shepherds, not that of the emperor; take up justice and devotion rather than the role of the godless and intemperate; take up peace and justice rather than violence, darkness and gloom.

## Prayer of the Faithful

### Introduction

As we gather to celebrate the Birth of our Saviour, Christ the Lord, let us open our hearts in prayer for the needs of our world and of our community.

### Petitions

We pray for Pope Francis and all Church leaders that they may continue to guide us into unity with you through the love they show for others.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the Church in Australia during the preparations for the Plenary Council 2020. In this listening and discernment stage may we be truly open to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for leaders throughout the world that in justice they will allow all Christians to celebrate the Incarnation and demonstrate the importance of Jesus in their lives and the life of the world.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the poor and marginalised. Give us the gifts of charity and compassion so that we may help those in need.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the People of God, that we may be a sign of your glory in today's society.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for children, that the Holy Spirit opens their minds and hearts to the message of Christmas through selfless giving and care of others.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those away from family during Christmas time, that they experience God's love through the love and care of those around them and find comfort in God's abiding presence.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

### Conclusion

Father, you reveal yourself to us fully in Jesus Christ. We celebrate the gift of your love and offer our prayers to you with faith in our hearts. We make our prayer through the Spirit and in the name of Jesus, your Son.

**Amen.**

## Music

by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

### CWB

A Child is Born in Bethlehem. R. Wright OSB/ Gregorian Chant. 612  
Angels We Have Heard on High. French Carol. 622  
Good Christians All, Rejoice. J. Mason Neale/. German Melody. 697  
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing. C. Wesley/ F. Mendelssohn. 704  
Joy to the World. I. Watts/ G. F. Handel. 728  
O Come all Ye Faithful. J. Wade. 760  
O Little Town of Bethlehem. P. Brooks/ English melody. 772  
Of The Father's Love Begotten. J. Mason Neale et al. 779  
Once in Royal David's City. H. Gauntlett/ C. F. Alexander. 782  
Silent Night. J. Mohr/ F. Gruber. 803  
The First Nowell. English text and melody. 822. (Verses 1, 2, 4 & 6)  
Unto us a Boy Is Born. P. Dearmer/ Piaë Cantiones. 849

### GA

Angels We Have Heard on High. French Carol. 286  
Away in a Manger. J. McFarland/ W. Kirkpatrick. 289  
Child of Mercy. D. Haas. 292  
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing. C. Wesley/ F. Mendelssohn. 294  
Joy to the World. I. Watts/ G. F. Handel. 295  
O Come all Ye Faithful. J. Wade. 760  
O Little Town of Bethlehem. P. Brooks/ L. Redner. 296  
Once in Royal David's City. H. Gauntlett/ C. F. Alexander. 297  
Silent Night. J. Mohr/ F. Gruber. 290  
The First Nowell. English text and melody. 298 (Verses 1, 2, 4 & 6)

### AOV1

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing. C. Wesley/ F. Mendelssohn. 171  
Joy to the World. I. Watts/ G. F. Handel. 170  
O Come all Ye Faithful. J. Wade. 167  
Silent Night. J. Mohr/ F. Gruber. 168  
The First Nowell. English text and melody. 169 (Verses 1, 2 & 5)  
What Child Is This. W. C. Dix/ English melody. 165 (Verses 1-2)

### AOV2

Angels We Have Heard on High. French Carol. 140  
Sing We, Sing We Noel. K. Poelker. 124

### AOV4Kids

And Did You See Him Little Star. C. Gibson/ H. Clyde. 60  
Out on the Road to Bethlehem. M. Nicol. 61  
Baby Lying in a Manger. P. Combe. 63  
Can This Really Be True? L. Newton/ T. Wittwer. 64

### Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy

Psalms 95: *Today is born our Saviour, Christ the Lord.*  
Psalm 95: David C. Isele/A Gregory Murray OSB. CWB 189  
Psalm 96: Today Is Born Our Saviour: Colin Smith. GA 56  
Psalm 96 (95): Jenny O'Brien. JOBA pg. 18  
Today is Born Our Saviour. Tune Adeste Fideles. Arr. Tony Alonso LPSF pg. 9

### Music selection by Michael Mangan

**Gloria to God** (TT/SYJ) [Gathering, Recessional]

**Gloria, Gloria** (STAR) [CHILDREN, Gathering, Recessional]

**There Is A Child** (TT/SYJ) *based on Is 9:1-7*

**This Little Boy** (TT/SYJ) [Non-Scriptural Reflection]



# 25 December 2019

## The Nativity of the Lord, (Christmas) Mass in the Day

Reflection by Gerard Moore

### Introduction

The readings for this Mass move us away from narrative and image onto the theological imagination behind the feast itself. In this, the opening of the Gospel of John is central. It draws our focus onto the wonder of the incarnation itself and the bewildering step by the divine to enter fully into our reality and our nature. The Word made flesh is embedded amongst us, the creator is enfleshed within the creation, the light is brought forth to break the darkness.

### Penitential Act

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you are the radiant light of God's glory.  
Lord have mercy.

You loved us before the beginning of time.  
Christ have mercy.

You are the Word who is God.  
Lord have mercy.

### First Reading

#### Isaiah 52:7-10

This poem from Isaiah sings with joy, peace and compassion. It opens our hearts to the consolation that God is for all humanity.

### Second Reading

#### Hebrews 1:1-6

The author of the Letter to the Hebrews reminds us that the Son shares in the glory of God. In this he was co-creator of the universe which is sustained and purified through him. Further, as the incarnate Christ he sits at the right hand of God, bringing our humanity into the centre of divine activity.

### Gospel

#### John 1:1-18

Building on references to the first creation story in Genesis, this reading celebrates the breaking of the light into darkness through the Word taking flesh and entering fully and completely into human experience and human history as one of us.

### Reflection

The Gospel for the Mass during the day strikes us as somewhat at odds with the celebration going on around us. We are in the midst now of presents, the crib, new things, meal preparation and relatives visiting. Many of the members of our parish communities have reflected on the feast of Christmas and set aside time for the poor, lonely and discomforted. There is a lot of greeting, tired kids, worn families and excitement all bundled together. Underneath there are some fault lines of stress and difficulty. And so to the choice of the Gospel of John.

Strikingly it is not about the child, the mother, the angels, shepherds, or Joseph. Yet it comes from the most ancient strands of thinking through the feast. The origins of celebrating the birth of the Lord are around the inbreaking of the light into the darkness. This is the Johannine paradigm: the Word has come to shine into the darkness. Christmas is the feast of the incarnation. It is the eternal that has come to dwell among us as one of us. The gospel has a wonderful play on the first Genesis creation account. The Word, which in the Genesis account 'spoke' creation, first brought forth the light. That same Word now comes forth as the light. The darkness of primordial chaos was pierced by light. The darkness of human life in community is visited by a light that cannot be overcome. While the great lights of the sun and the moon shine on humanity, the greater light of the Word incarnate shines out from humanity.

In the dwelling amongst us of the Word made flesh we find the revelation of the glory of God. There are a range of responses to this good news. There is the recognition that Jesus is the revelation of God. There is the revelation that we are now children of God, something Paul will name as our adoption as daughters and sons of God. There is the understanding that the law of Moses has given way to grace and truth in Christ. There is the pain that this light is not always recognized and worse not accepted.

The place of John the Baptist is theologically significant. Interestingly the focus is not on any family ties between them, a message that resonates particularly well at Christmas. Rather, he is a testimony to the light. We too are invited to take up where John left off: to be witnesses to the light. Our testimony now, in light of the incarnation and the resurrection, is our contemporary witness to the world of the power of the light and our relationship to God. Just as John writes that the darkness remains, though the light prevails, so we are reminded that our witnessing will be within a context of pain, difficulty, rejection and misunderstanding.

Our Gospel for the Christmas during the day lead us away from piety and custom back to the theological

foundations of the feast. This supported by the two earlier lections. Much the same as John, the author of the Letter to the Hebrews begins his missive by reminding us that the Son shares in the glory of God. In this, the text recognizes that he was co-creator of the universe which is sustained and purified through him. It is the incarnate Christ who sits at the right hand of God, bringing our humanity into the centre of divine activity.

This is complemented by the text from the prophet Isaiah. Here we are warmed with the tidings of good news, struck by the beauty of God's action. The incarnation brings peace, consolation, good news, salvation. Nor is this just for Israel, but for all the ends of the earth. The passage rings with hope and consolation.

Often by the time the community gathers for the Mass during the day there is a high degree of distraction, a bit of tiredness, and thoughts moving elsewhere. The readings may be a bit too theologically rich, but there is something ever new and ever challenging in the contemplation and celebration of the inbreaking of the light and the dwelling of

## Prayer of the Faithful

### Introduction

On this day we remember that the Word was made flesh. We turn to God with our petitions confident that God is near to us in our needs.

### Petitions

We pray for the leaders of the Church as we celebrate the Feast of Christmas. May their example of love and mercy shine through the world and demonstrate the real meaning of Christmas.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the Church in Australia during the preparations for the Plenary Council 2020. In this listening and discernment stage may we be truly open to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for leaders of all nations that they recognise that you came to us as a defenceless little baby and became a refugee. May our leaders work for the rights of the refugees, victims of abuse, the elderly and the disabled.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for this parish community. Moved by your love for us may we serve our neighbour with humility and be signs of Christ's presence in the world.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the lonely in our society. We remember that Jesus was also rejected by his own people. Fill us with your love that we may add an extra place at our Christmas banquet for anyone would otherwise be alone this day.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all broken families who will not be reunited this Christmas. Fill them with your grace, that aware of your love for them, they may desire to work towards reconciliation with their loved ones.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

## Conclusion

On this special day of celebration we know that our salvation through the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus is real. We offer these prayers with confidence that they will be heard. We make our prayer through the power of your Spirit, in the name of Jesus, your Son.

**Amen.**

## Music

by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

### CWB

A Child is Born in Bethlehem. R. Wright OSB/ Gregorian Chant. 612  
Angels We Have Heard on High. French Carol. 622  
Good Christians All, Rejoice. J. Mason Neale/. German Melody. 696  
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing. C. Wesley/ F. Mendelssohn. 704  
Joy to the World. I. Watts/ G. F. Handel. 728  
O Come all Ye Faithful. J. Wade. 760  
O Little Town of Bethlehem. P. Brooks/ English melody. 772  
Of The Father's Love Begotten. J. Mason Neale et al. 779  
Once in Royal David's City. H. Gauntlett/ C. F. Alexander. 782  
The First Nowell. English text and melody. 822. (Verses 1, 2, 4 & 6)  
Unto us a Boy Is Born. P. Dearmer/ Piae Cantiones. 849

### GA

Angels We Have Heard on High. French Carol. 286  
Away in a Manger. J. McFarland/ W. Kirkpatrick. 289  
Child of Mercy. D. Haas. 292  
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing. C. Wesley/ F. Mendelssohn. 294  
Joy to the World. I. Watts/ G. F. Handel. 295  
O Come all Ye Faithful. J. Wade. 760  
O Little Town of Bethlehem. P. Brooks/ L. Redner. 296  
Once in Royal David's City. H. Gauntlett/ C. F. Alexander. 297  
The First Nowell. English text and melody. 298 (Verses 1, 2, 4 & 6)

### AOV1

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing. C. Wesley/ F. Mendelssohn. 171  
Joy to the World. I. Watts/ G. F. Handel. 170  
O Come all Ye Faithful. J. Wade. 167  
The First Nowell. English text and melody. 169 (Verses 1, 2 & 5)  
What Child Is This. W. C. Dix/ English melody. 165 (Verses 1-2)

### AOV2

Angels We Have Heard on High. French Carol. 140  
Sing We, Sing We Noel. K. Poelker. 124

### AOV4Kids

And Did You See Him Little Star. C. Gibson/ H. Clyde. 60  
Out on the Road to Bethlehem. M. Nicol. 61  
Baby Lying in a Manger. P. Combe. 63  
Can This Really Be True? L. Newton/ T. Wittwer. 64

### Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy

Psalms 97: *All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God.*

Psalms 97: Joseph Roff/Joseph Gelineau SJ. CWB 185

Psalms 97(98): Christopher Willcock SJ. CWB 598

Psalms 98: All the Ends of the Earth: David Haas/Marty Haugen. GA 57

Psalms 98 (97) : Jenny O'Brien. JOBA pg. 20

All the Ends of the Earth. David Hass and Marty Haugen. LPSF. Pg. 14

Music selection by Michael Mangan

**Glory to God** (TT/SYJ) [Gathering, Recessional]

**Glory, Gloria** (STAR) [CHILDREN, Gathering, Recessional]

**All The Ends Of The Earth** (LCC) *Ps 97/98* (Chn's Lectionary)

**Sing New Songs of Joy** (FWS) *based on Ps 97 (98)* [Gathering, Recessional]

**There Is A Child** (TT/SYJ) *based on Is 9:1-7*

**This Little Boy** (TT/SYJ) [Non-Scriptural Reflection]





# 29 December 2019

## The Holy Family

Reflection by Gerard Moore

### Introduction

Today, the readings bring to us reflections on the meaning of the family. As the primary locus of our learning about love, faith and culture our celebration of family flows easily on from the feast of the birth of the child Jesus and the influx of divine light into creation. There is a simplicity in the way the family teaches respect, compassion, kindness and patience. As well, the early life of Jesus shows how unsettled family life can be, and how important it is for the Christian community to support all families.

### Penitential Act

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you came to fulfil God's plan for our salvation.

Lord have mercy.

You are the compassion of the Father.

Christ have mercy.

You teach us the way of wisdom.

Lord have mercy.

### First Reading

#### **Ecclesiasticus 3: 2-6.12-14**

We have in this reading an ancient code of honour, respect and care due to the father of the household.

### Second Reading

#### **Colossians 3: 12-21**

This longer version of the reading contains a paragraph outlining the subordination of the wife to the husband. This understanding of marriage is not compatible with contemporary experience of a graced loving marriage relationship, and so it is advisable to choose the option for a shorter selection from Colossians.

### Gospel Reading

#### **Matthew 2:13-15. 19-23**

The Gospel passages opens onto the plight of the refugee family, fleeing violence against their child Jesus, and finally settling in a new place far from their origins.

### Reflection

As with the Christmas readings, the gospel carries the sense of the feast, and the other readings supplement the theme. Our current context makes this feast both more important but also more complex to celebrate. Australia has been undergoing a searching discussion of the nature of the family, the meaning of relationships and the possibilities of extended family. There is no simple solution, and no single model of family. This is certainly true in the wider society in which we live, where a variety of loving relationships are now under the banner of the family. The faithful know this only too well, whether from the experiences of their own families or from the workplace, the schoolyard or the shops. The integrity of the Christian family ought not be placed as a rebuke against these other attempts to love strongly and faithfully. In light of this, we now read this text in a world where the nuclear family is a dominant model, particularly in the west. The reading appears to support this as it focuses on Joseph, the child and the mother. Yet at the time of the birth of Jesus, the extended family was the key building block of society. In many ways the ancient hearers of this text would have been a little perplexed that the tiny group was so abandoned by their relatives. We may have lost some of the whiff of scandal that sits beneath the text.

And so to the sense of the Christian family. Within the church too there are a variety of models of family. Our communities are made up of extended families, single parent families, families large and small, multi-racial families, multi lingual families, families who live within communities. Indigenous families have differing constructs of how it is to belong. This context is perhaps more important now than ever. As noted for the Christmas commentaries, the credibility of the church around sexuality, relationships and family is under close scrutiny. The credibility of the preacher and his message is almost always at stake. How do we see in the feast of the Holy Family the possibility of supporting all families, while credibly offering to society the love of Christ and the example of Christian family life?

The Gospel allows us to explore some features of family life that are not always discussed. One is 'dreams', but equally the voice of angels. Joseph should not be painted as a sort of 'dreamer', however he is attentive to the ways the Spirit works amidst his family, and is alert and listening to the promptings from the divine. Families have this characteristic. It may not be angels and dreams that carry it, or indeed it may be, but hidden within the dynamics of the family is the ongoing discernment of ideas, messages, thoughts and visions. Joseph is alert to seeking what is good for the family. He is continually 'listening' and discerning so as to keep the family

safe. One of the ministries of the church should be to help families to discern, to listen, and to keep secure.

The second feature is the unsettled nature of family life. The Holy Family are itinerants, stateless, and finally find a home in an unlikely town away from family and connections. The family unit in society seeks to gain a secure footing and a permanent place, yet the reality is often far from the ideal. Many, many families in Australia have their origins in the type of insecurity that Joseph and Mary faced. The harsh reality can be quickly forgotten by succeeding generations, though its effects linger.

In this, then, there is a message of hope from the Gospel. Unusual families are authentic sources of grace. We as a church community under this Gospel are challenged to support all families, and to be attentive to the possibilities inherent in the unlikely families. We might ask the question of how were Joseph, Mary and child received they took up residence in Nazareth, and what welcome do we accord new families into our area and street?

Beside our Gospel are the readings from the Book of Ecclesiasticus and the Letter to the Colossians. The Wisdom reading deserves our attention. The glaringly obvious is that it portrays a patriarchal family structure, though with due deference to the role of the mother. As focused around the father and then the son, there is much here that does not feed the contemporary family, and indeed which serves to reinforce structures that continue to do violence to lives. The opening gambit in which honour from God is granted to the father of the house offers little comfort to those from abusive families.

Without attempting to retrieve those aspects of the text, there are some further elements that warrant scrutiny. The text is set within a framework of 'honour'. This cultural concept is not as strong in the longstanding Australian community, however it is present in many cultures and highly active in migrant groups. It is often the glue that holds communities together. Again, this can be a constructive way of building society, but it can also lead the men and women, the sons and daughters within it to dynamics of shame, cover up, and collusion in oppression. As a parallel, some of this has been on display in various 'defences' of church leaders, where the emphasis has been placed on keeping safe the 'good' name of the church.

From our perspectives we may read this too individually, as the single family. However the broader context of the text is that of the dominant extended family, and in a sense this concept of honour to the father and the authority of the mother allows for some independence of the individual family unit from within the larger extended family. Perhaps the reading is saying that there is need for elasticity within the extended family structure to allow for the right authority of father and mother.

Two more positive aspects are present. Firstly, regardless of our considerations around honour, when viewed as a gift from God, the power of living within God's gifts is revealed. Living within this gift provides

atonement for sins, the acceptance of prayers, and the blessing of children. This is indeed a revelation, and is quite interesting when set beside the narrow focus found in some current theologies of atonement. Secondly, the reading draws a strong relationship between love of parents and living justly. While in part there is consideration around honour – 'grieve him not while he is ill' – there is a strong sense of the care and compassion that belongs to the frail and the ill.

While it is difficult to preach directly from the reading, there is the possibility of using the text to ask the community how authority, family and honour can be understood in our present context, one where these very concepts have been used against the love and honour of God. There is something similar with the reading from Colossians. It is difficult in today's Australia to imagine a context where the full version of this lectionary reading can be used in the liturgy. The section of Colossians 3:18-21 where wives are said to be subordinate to their husbands is no longer able to be heard without a loss to the credibility of the scriptures themselves. It also means that the riches of the first section of the text (verses 12-17) are crowded out of our hearing. Yet, here the lectionary, by placing v 12-17 into the feast of the Holy Family, applies the virtues of the Christian community to the family unit. It is a beautiful reading, in which the peace of Christ is set at the heart of the Christian life. This peace cannot be understood outside of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience: ultimately these are the signs of divine love. It is not clear that our lectionary has given the best texts to support the celebration of the Holy Family. Nevertheless, they are able to help us to celebrate the gift of family life, to understand the inherent fragility of the family, and to seek a credible voice as the church engages in dialogue with issues of family life in our society today.

## Prayer of the Faithful

### Introduction

On this Feast of the Holy Family we especially remember the needs of all families. Therefore we turn to God in total trust with our petitions.

### Petitions

We pray for the leaders of our Church that they always treat the needs of families with the dignity and respect that mirrors the mercy of God.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the Church in Australia during the preparations for the Plenary Council 2020. In this listening and discernment stage may we be truly open to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the leaders of all nations. May they provide laws that protect the interests of the family, particularly at the vulnerable times of the beginning and the end of life.



(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all families around the world. We pray that you may bestow on them your grace that they may always strive to be Christ to each other.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all families experiencing difficulties. Endow all fathers with the strength of Joseph and all mothers with the love of Mary. Protect them and provide for their needs.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all families in our Church. Enrich the faith of parents with your Word and sustain them in their work of passing their faith onto their children.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all families in our wider community. Help them to rise above the difficulties of division, addiction, financial despair and lack of hope so that they can appreciate the gift of love.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

## Conclusion

Father, we turn to you with these prayers for the families of our world and know that in your love and goodness you will answer our needs. We offer this prayer through the power of the Spirit, in the name of Jesus, your Son. **Amen.**

## Music

by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

### CWB

Angels We Have Heard on High. Trad. French Carol. 622  
For the Beauty of the Earth. F. Pierpont/ D. Evans. 678  
Good Christians All, Rejoice. J. M. Neale/ German Carol. 696  
Joy to the World. I. Watts/ G. F. Handel. 728  
Of the Father's Love Begotten. J. M. Neale/ Piae Cantiones. 779  
O Little Town of Bethlehem. P. Brooks/ English melody. 772  
Once in Royal David's City. C. F. Alexander/ H. J. Gauntlett. 782  
Sing of Mary, Pure and Lowly. R. F. Palmer. 808  
Where There is Charity and Love. R. Connolly. 863

### GA

Angels We Have Heard on High. Trad. French Carol. 286  
Away in A Manger. J. McFarland/ W. Kirkpatrick. 289  
For the Beauty of the Earth. F. Pierpont/ D. Evans. 427  
Joy to the World. I. Watts/ G. F. Handel. 295  
Once in Royal David's City. C. F. Alexander/ H. J. Gauntlett. 297  
Ubi Caritas/ Where true love and charity are found. Gregorian Chant. 319  
Ubi Caritas. Taize Chant. 324  
Where There is Charity and Love. R. Connolly. 323

### AOV1

For the Beauty of the Earth. F. Pierpont/ C. Kocher. 123  
Joy to the World. I. Watts/ G. F. Handel. 170  
Let there be peace on earth. S. Miller/ J. Jackson. 190  
What Child Is This? W. Dix. 165 (Verses 1-2)

### AOV2

Angels We Have Heard on High. Trad. French Carol. 140

### AOV4Kids

Baby Lying in a Manger. P. Combe. 63

## Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy

Psalm 127: *Happy are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways.*

Psalm 127: Joseph Gelineau SJ. CWB 192

Psalm 128: O Blest Are Those: Paul Inwood. GA 75

Psalm 128 (127): Jenny O'Brien. JOBA pg. 22

Blessed are those who Fear the Lord: Tony Alonso. LPSF pg. 18

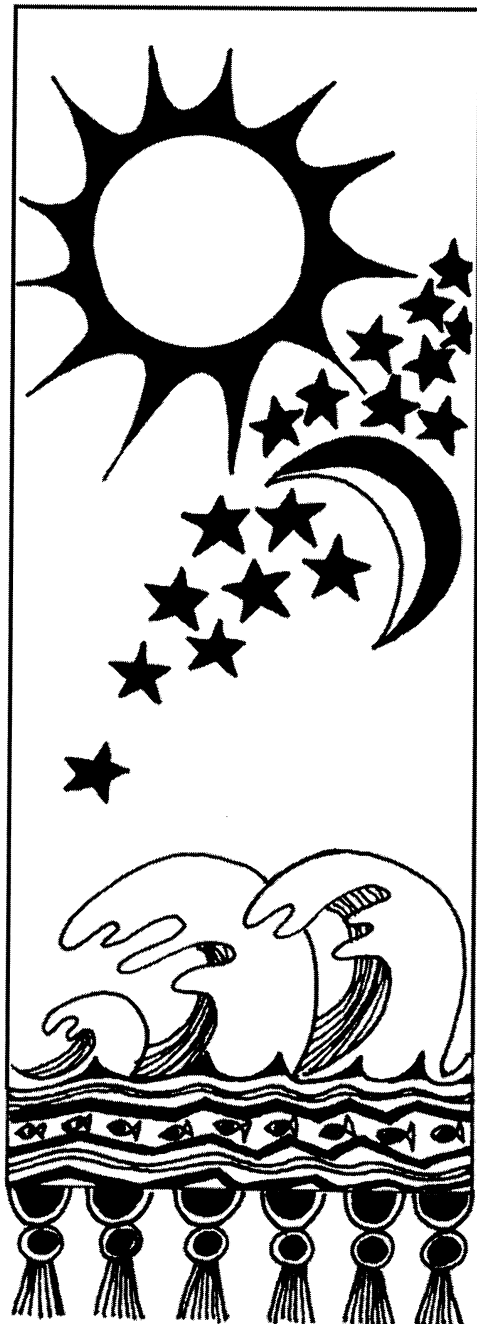
## Music selection by Michael Mangan

Glory to God (TT/SYJ) [Gathering, Recessional]

Glory, Gloria (STAR) [CHILDREN, Gathering, Recessional]

All The Ends Of The Earth (LCC) Ps 97/98 (Chn's Lectionary) (Seasonal Psalm)

This Little Boy (TT/SYJ) [Non-Scriptural Reflection]





# 1 January 2020

## Mary, the Holy Mother of God (Wednesday) World Day of Peace

Reflection by Gerard Moore

### Introduction

The calendar year opens with the solemnity of Mary as the Mother of God. The title points to the incarnation of Christ and our salvation through the divine taking flesh. Our thoughts, however, are directed to the graciousness of God, the freedom we have in grace, and the place of Mary at the centre of an authentic human response to grace

### Penitential Act

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you came as the son of Mary.  
Lord have mercy.

You draw all creation to the Father.  
Christ have mercy.

You are our salvation.  
Lord have mercy.

### First Reading

#### Numbers 6:22-27

This reading reminds us we are under the gracious blessing of God: this is the great priestly blessing

### Second Reading

#### Galatians 4:4-7

Our freedom in grace begins with the sending of Christ, born of a woman.

### Gospel Reading

#### Luke 2:16-21

As the shepherds recognize the glory of God present in the infant, we see something of the interior reflection of Mary, who ponders the mystery.

### Reflection

The reading for today's feast do not clearly concentrate on the life and contribution of Mary, Mother of God, but rather offer a theological sense of how she embodies key aspects of the church. In this way, they do not feed so much our piety but our theological selves. However, with this there is a strong drive on how she offers a profound Christian spirituality.

The blessing given by God to Aaron through Moses is an important choice for understanding the solemnity. The naming of Mary as Mother of God has prominence in the church from the use of this title in the controversies around the nature of Christ, and whether he was both human and divine. While set within the Christmas octave, when the actual mothering role of Mary is immediately obvious, the

readings offer further reflection. The Aaronic blessing is a revelation of the gracious nature of God. What does God bring: blessing, keeping, openness, graciousness, kindness and peace. This is the 'name' of God. In our piety Mary embodies these. In our theology, God's nature as revealed is defined by these. In our spirituality, we are called to exemplify these. This blessing bespeaks the nature of the church, and when set within this feast, something of a marian church!

We follow the hearing of this reading with a psalm that echoes the Aaronic blessing and has some resonance with the Magnificat. The message of mercy is always a welcome reminder!

There is something similar in the lection from Paul. The reference to Mary is elliptical. It is not about a piety, but rather a theological point. The incarnation could only take place because Jesus was born of a woman. Paul uses this base line to establish his point that the dignity we now enjoy is built upon the incarnation. The reading is replete with plays on the language of familial relationships: Father, the Son, adoptive children, the Spirit of the Son, Abba, heirs. And the text is perhaps one of the most central New Testament theological treatises. We now live in the dignity of being heirs of God. We are the adopted sisters and brothers of Christ. We are caught up in the age and presence of the Spirit. God has been revealed as utterly close to us, as close as an Abba relationship implies, yet even closer. Theologically this dignity stems from the incarnation. In terms of piety, this came about through the obedience and choice of one woman. Spiritually, we as a people and as a church are able to live in freedom, and are called to exemplify the absolute graciousness of God along with the surprising and courageous response of Mary.

The Gospel brings us closer to the woman herself, and so puts us on more familiar ground. Yet, though more based in the story of her life, the narrative is thoroughly theological.

One cannot help but be surprised at the ability of the young mother to receive visitors so soon after the unaided birth of the child! Interestingly there are no mid-wife stories about the birth of such a remarkable infant. In this we can see that the stories are at the service of the theology. First up, from the excerpt we have been given we see that the shepherds are made welcome. This is an unusual thing, as they were not seen as desirable company. Shepherds were often portrayed as untrustworthy and shiftless. Yet there is also a sense that the text holds them as more than their reputation. David had been a shepherd, and Bethlehem was his home town. While the shepherds bring to us the intended breadth of the message of

salvation, they also hold in front of us that this child is closely related to the future of David's people, and indeed was also from David's village.

The shepherds are not quite missionary evangelists, but these unlikely messengers are able to spread the news that something new is coming, that God has made an intervention, that the age of glory and praise has been established. This is muted by the fact that they go home, and do not set out on a missionary journey. Their pilgrimage to the stable is the first recognition of this new work of God, but its message must await the growth to maturity of the child. With this, it is a bit business as usual. The shepherds return to their flocks, and the baby is circumcised as per the religious custom.

Two theological pieces allow for more to be known. Firstly, Mary the young mother responds not with bewilderment but with reflection. She is seen as pondering these things in her heart. Again there is a deep vein of piety and spirituality to be mined here. In the midst of all that is happening around her, and all that is happening to her, and all the calls of a young infant upon her, her response is characterized as reflection and discernment. Mothers all over will recognize that this was not part of the actuality, yet will grasp the theological insight. The pondering is a bridge to the future ministry of Jesus. What he will become is not determined by the rejoicing of the shepherds. It will only become known in the lived practice of the infant growing to a child to an adult. Though their situations are different, the mother at the birth and the mother of the adult are one, but much passes in the between time.

Secondly, the child is named. The theology of 'name' is critical across the Hebrew scriptures, and essential to understanding the New Testament writings. We saw this in the first reading where the blessing is understood as an invocation of the name of God. There is little difference in Hebrew thought between the name, the meaning and the power of a person. The blessing shows forth the 'name' of God and reveals the divine character: blessing, keeping, openness, graciousness, kindness and peace. Similarly the naming of the child Jesus theologically reflects the salvific meaning of the birth. At the time, the name Jesus was held to denote 'Yahweh saves'. Yet, more so it denotes the obedience of Mary (and Joseph). They follow the command of the angel, and name the boy as requested. This is a continuation of the theme of Mary the obedient one. In the naming of the child she is obedient to the divine messenger. In circumcising the child she is obedient to the demands of her religious belief. This dichotomy reflects the tension that will grow as Jesus attains adulthood, and which will eventually engulf his ministry: obedience to God through the religious establishment, and in contrast beyond the religious establishment. Helpful to us today as we work through the various Royal Commission Reports is an appreciation of this recognition of the necessary difference between the divine and the church, and though interrelated, cannot be conflated one to the other.

The solemnity of Mary the Mother of God opens the calendar year (at least in the western world!). Liturgically it is set within the octave of Christmas, and so continues on the celebration of the incarnation. The proximity to Christmas allows us to meditate on Mary the mother. Yet the feast offers more than that. We are placed within a profound theological space around the name of God, the pivotal point of the incarnation through a birth, the newly bestowed dignity of the baptized as heirs, and power and pain of obedience as exemplified in Mary. Infusing all this is the refrain of the psalm which reminds us that God chooses mercy.

## Prayer of the Faithful

### World Day of Peace

#### Introduction

On this Feast of Mary, Mother of God, the first day of the New Year, let us turn to God, our Father in heaven, for all our needs as we pray.

#### Petitions

That the Church may effectively proclaim to the world the divinity of Christ and the special role of Mary, his mother.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the Church in Australia during the preparations for the Plenary Council. In this listening and discernment stage may we be truly open to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

That the leaders of nations will, this year, seek equality and peace for all people as they enact just laws and equal distribution of wealth.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

That all parents and those who care for children may, like Mary, welcome new life and be strengthened to nurture and guide their children.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

That lonely and neglected people may come to understand the love of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Jesus through the generosity and care of others.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

That those in our community who have asked for our prayers and those who are suffering during these festive days, may receive a spirit of grace and power to sustain them.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

#### Conclusion

God of love and mercy, in our expectation of your answer to our prayer, we pray with hope through the strength of the Spirit and in the name of Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

## Music

by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

### CWB

Angels We Have Heard on High. Trad. French Carol. 622  
Canticle of Mary. J. Gelineau. 606  
Come Holy Ghost, Creator Come. R. Maurus, et al./ Thomas Tallis. 654  
Good Christians All, Rejoice. J.M. Neale/ German Carol. 696  
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing. F. Mendelssohn. 704  
Holy Virgin, By God's Decree. P. Deca/J.P. Lecot, W. R. Lawrence. 714  
Mary, crowned with living light. 742  
Sing of Mary, Pure and Lowly. R. F. Palmer. 808

### GA

Angels We Have Heard on High. Trad. French Carol. 286  
Come Holy Ghost, Creator Come. R. Maurus, et al./ Thomas Tallis. 376  
Hail Mary: Gentle Woman. C. Landry. 544  
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing. F. Mendelssohn. 704  
Magnificat (Tell out My Soul). T. Dudley Smith/ W. Greatorex. 550  
May God Bless and Keep You. C. Walker. 441  
My Soul Rejoices. O. Alstott. 250  
There is Nothing Told. C. Willcock SJ. 548  
Tell Out, My Soul

### AOV1

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing. F. Mendelssohn. 704  
May God Bless and Keep You. C. Walker. 177  
O Holy Mary. O. Alstott. 141  
What Child Is This? W. Dix. 165 (Verses 1 and 2)

### AOV2

Angels We Have Heard on High. Trad. French Carol. 140

### AOV4Kids

Final Blessing. Adapted D. Haas. 161

### Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy

Psalm 66: *May God bless us in his mercy.*  
Psalm 66: Robert J. Batastini/Joseph Gelineau SJ. CWB 195  
May God Bless Us in His Mercy: Tony Alonso. LPSF pg.18

### Music selection by Michael Mangan

**There Is A Child** (TT/SYJ) based on *Is 9:1-7* [Gathering]

**Song of Blessing** (SHOF) based on *Numbers 6:22-27*

**Glory to God** (TT/SYJ) [Gathering, Recessional]

**My Spirit Sings** (FWS/SYJ) *Magnificat* [Gathering, Recessional]



Ps 32:11

# Exult in Yahweh!



# 5 January 2020

## Sunday of The Epiphany of the Lord

Reflection by Gerard Moore

### Introduction

The feast of the Epiphany is a celebration of how God has come amongst us to reveal grace and peace, and to call the church and all the faithful to be agents of revelation. In part, the grace and love of Christ is made manifest through our gracious and loving lives and actions.

### Penitential Act

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you to redeem all people.  
Lord have mercy.

You are the light of the world.  
Christ have mercy.

You bring us all to the Father.  
Lord have mercy.

### First Reading

**Isaiah 60:1-6**

Jerusalem is invited to emerge and take up its role as a light to the nations.

### Second Reading

**Ephesians 3:2-3a. 5-6**

In this reading Paul insists that we are coheirs and co-partners in the promise of Christ. This is part of the mystery of revelation.

### Gospel Reading

**Matthew 2:1-12**

The story of the visit of the magi is an exotic tale and compelling drama at the service of teaching us that the revelation of Christ among us is a transformative message for all cultures and peoples

### Reflection

Our opening reading from the prophet Isaiah has a familiar excitement but also a not so familiar challenge. Through the text we are invited to be a light to those beyond our walls. This has a number of aspects. If Jerusalem can take up its destiny as a city infused with God, then the nations, those others, will flock to it. They will be attracted to the light of God that shines from it, and as well, be led by the qualities of that light. Jerusalem will allow others to be able to see, and to take a path. The way Jerusalem acts, prays and holds for the divine will allow darkness to be disbursed and the glory of God revealed. Consequently the nations shall be able to see a way forward. Consequently some will come to Jerusalem itself, greatly enhancing its wealth. There is something of a double play at work here. The divinely chosen city will offer light to others as they take their journey, while also attracting them to its ambit.

From this emerges the not so familiar challenge, or perhaps a challenge more familiar than we care to admit. Those who come to Jerusalem, those nations, kings, ships and caravans, are foreigners. They are not Israelites. They are Other. The prophet welcomes them as they recognize the light and proclaim the praise of God. Behind this is a profound challenge to the people of Israel. They may be the chosen people, but God is seeking that they be a vehicle for other voices, cultures, languages and peoples to sing true praise.

Applying this vision splendid to ourselves and our local community is a deeply Christian challenge. The light we are invited to share is not for ourselves, but for God. The light of God shining through our community will attract others who are different, yet belong because they sing the praise of God. Do we have the openness to allow that light to shine, and to open our gates to the 'nations'? to bear the light of Christ is to be open constantly to change and to be willing always to welcome whoever is attracted.

We see the same message in Paul, placed differently but clearly at work. Paul is attempting to break the sense held by the Jews that they are the only chosen ones, and at the same time, that Christians needed to be Jewish to be faithful. He sees himself in the role of a steward of God's revelation. A steward is one who has the light, but does not own it. Rather, the steward facilitates others to be in the light. Paul teaches strongly that the revelation of God is that these others, these gentiles, are authentic coheirs and co-partners in the promise of Christ. His radical message, which reaches down through the ages to us, is that we who are not Jewish also truly are enfolded into the revelation of God in Christ. We too belong.

Steeped in these two readings, we come to narrative of the Magi. It is difficult to read the text outside our piety around the story, and perhaps this is intended in the scriptures themselves. The tale is exotic: the star, the bad king, the good infant king in swaddling, the visitors from afar, their skills in astronomy and astrology, dreams, warnings, secret meetings, the gifts, the peasant parents, the humble setting, the warning to take a different route. It is a great and improbable story, yet it encapsulates a profound theology of revelation. Christ is revealed as God amongst us. The manifestation of salvation is attractive beyond any bounds we consider, even beyond the mind of a scheming king. The chief priests and the scribes have knowledge but they cannot apply it. Nature, in the form of a star, knows more, and the outsiders respond. They bring what is fitting, and see beyond the humble circumstances. They respond to the star with purpose and determination – reputations clearly at risk. They respond to meeting the infant Lord with joy and generosity. Later Christian legend has them travelling almost unceasingly across Europe, giving them names, racial identities and powers.

And so to the act of revelation. In our current climate there is a sense in which the church is more identifiable with Herod than with the magi and the holy family. Herod was for himself, the Magi for salvation. Paul identified that Judaism had become closed to grace, while he opened up the theology of revelation to the all the baptised as sisters and brothers of Christ. The prophet Isaiah almost unwittingly transforms Jerusalem to a place of the nations rather than a place for Israel. The revelation of Christ amongst us is at the same time the revelation of Christ amongst us for the poor, the needy and the lost. It is light. However as the light attracts, so the church is changed by the newness of its members and the differences they bring. The effects of revelation are ongoing. The light too shines back on our institution and its standing in the community, providing the church with the need to face up to the scrutiny that the light brings. In all this the Christian response is aligned with that of the Magi – the praise of God.

## Prayer of the Faithful

### Introduction

The whole world is called to acknowledge that Jesus is Lord. The good news of Jesus' birth is for all peoples: Jews and Gentiles, rich and poor. Let us pray to God, our Father, for our needs and the needs of all peoples in the world.

## Petitions

Let us pray for the Church and its ministry to the world, especially for missionaries who bring the light of the Gospel to those in darkness.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Let us pray for the Church in Australia during the preparations for the Plenary Council. In this listening and discernment stage may we be truly open to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Let us pray for the leaders and wise people of every country and every religious background, that they may continue to be enlightened by God's grace and realise that respect for each other and cooperation in times of trouble will be the foundation of justice and peace in the world.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Let us pray for the Jewish people and for all who live in the Holy Land that they may be inspired to find a peaceful solution to *(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Let us pray for those who travel a dark path through sickness, oppression, persecution and any form of misery, that they may find a star of guidance leading them to the compassion of the Lord.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Let us pray for ourselves and our community, that we may joyously follow the Infant King and bring the light of his love to all we meet.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

## Conclusion

God, you rule the earth with justice: accept these prayers according to your will. We pray through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

## Music

by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

### CWB

A Child is Born in Bethlehem. R. Wright OSB/ Gregorian Chant. 612  
Earth Has Many a Noble City. E. Caswell/ C. F. Witt. 669  
Good Christians All, Rejoice. J. M. Neale/ German Carol. 696  
Joy to the World. I. Watts/ G. F. Handel. 728  
Of the Father's Love Begotten. J. M. Neale/ Piae Cantiones. 779  
The First Nowell. English Carol. 822 (Especially verses 3 and 5.)

### GA

All the ends of the earth. B. Dufford SJ. 420  
Child of Mercy. D. Haas. 292  
Joy to the World. I. Watts/ G. F. Handel. 295  
Song for Epiphany. B. Moore/ C. Willcock SJ. 300  
The First Nowell. English Carol. 298 (especially verses 3 and 5)  
We Three Kings of Orient Are. J. Hopkins. 299

### AOV1

All the ends of the earth. B. Dufford SJ. 76  
Joy to the World. I. Watts/ G. F. Handel. 170  
The First Nowell. English Carol. 169 (especially verses 3 and 5)  
What Child Is This. W. Dix. 165

**Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy**

Psalm 71: *Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.*

Psalm 71: Christopher Willcock SJ. CWB 196

Psalm 72 (71): Jenny O'Brien. JOBA pg. 24

Lord, Every Nation on Earth: Paul Mason. PM pg. 56

Lord, Every Nation of Earth Will Adore You: Marty Haugen. LPA pg. 21

**Music selection by Michael Mangan**

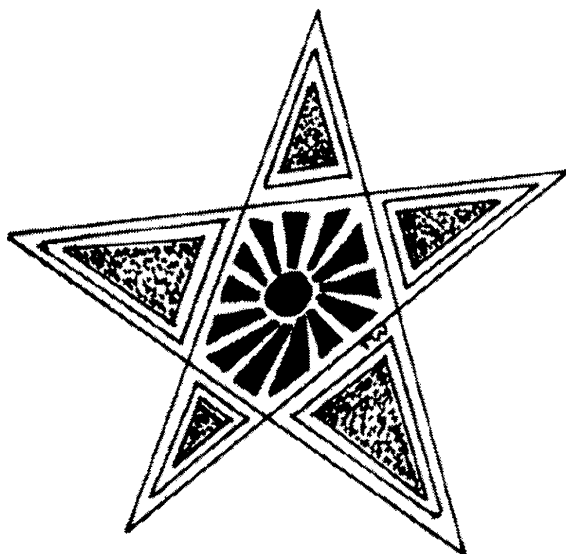
**Follow the Christmas Star** (TT/SYJ) [CHILDREN Gathering, Recessional]

**Song of Light** (SYJ) [Non-Scriptural Reflection]

**Live in the Light** (TWB) [Non-Scriptural Reflection]

**We Come to Worship Him** (STAR)

**Sing New Songs of Joy** (FWS/CWBII) *based on Ps 97 (98)*  
[Gathering, Recessional]



**The sight of the  
star filled them  
with delight.**



# 12 January 2020

## The Baptism of the Lord (Sunday)

Reflection by Anthony Doran

### Pastoral Note

*Today's feast would be an ideal time to use the Blessing & Sprinkling of Holy Water as an alternate to the Penitential Act. In this case, it would also make sense to renew baptismal promises instead of the Creed, and then sprinkle the people with holy water, following the model used on Easter Sunday.*

### Introduction

In today's feast, we celebrate the manifestation of God in the Baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist in the river Jordan. To remind us that we, too, are God's beloved sons and daughters through baptism, later in Mass, we will renew our own Baptismal promises and be sprinkled once again with the waters of baptism.

### Penitential Act

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you gave us baptism through water and the Spirit.

Lord have mercy.

You are the beloved Son of the Father.

Christ have mercy.

You call all of us to live our baptism.

Lord have mercy.

### First Reading

**Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7**

This reading, taken from the First Song of the Suffering Servant, talks of the chosen servant, taken by the hand and formed by the Lord. This servant, will bring justice to the earth and be a light to the nations.

### Second Reading

**Acts 10:34-38**

In this speech of Peter to the household of Cornelius, we learn that God has no favourites other than those who do what is right and acceptable. This new era has been inaugurated by Jesus Christ, anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power.

### Gospel Reading

**Matthew 3:13-17**

In Matthew's brief account of the baptism of Jesus, John the Baptist, conscious of who he is about to baptise, protests that he is unworthy. Jesus contends that righteousness – a favourite quality in Matthew's Gospel – demands that he indeed be baptised by John. Righteousness is the quality stressed in all three of the readings.

### Reflection

Today's Feast of the Baptism of the Lord brings our Season of Christmas to a close. This feast commemorates the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River by John the Baptist. In the Gospels, the baptism of Jesus is an unusual event. Unusual because it is mentioned by all four of the Gospel Writers.

But, even though the baptism of Jesus is mentioned in all four of the Gospels, details differ between the accounts. But all four accounts agree that the baptism of Jesus is a theophany. A theophany or manifestation of the glory of God to the world. Another epiphany. For when Jesus is baptised, the Spirit descends on him in the form of a dove.

And as it is recorded in Matthew's Gospel which we read today, a voice is heard from heaven: "This is my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on him." So following the manifestation of God in the newborn Christ in the stable at Bethlehem, following the manifestation of God to the wise men who visited from the East, we conclude our celebration of Christmas with this manifestation of God at the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan.

We know that, in the early Church, as our Gospels were being formed, the baptism of Jesus caused some embarrassment. For the earliest of Christians asked themselves why did Jesus need to be baptised? John the Baptist, earlier in Matthew's Gospel, says to the people who had flocked to him: "I baptise you in water for repentance..." And the people who came to John to be baptised by him in the river Jordan confessed their sins.

But, if Jesus is without sin, why then should he be baptised? The fact that this supposedly embarrassing baptism is recorded in all four of the Gospels, seems to indicate that it is a real historical event. Jesus was indeed baptised. But why? Why was Jesus, the manifestation of God-among-us, baptised? Why was Jesus, our Emmanuel, baptised? And what does it mean for us that he was baptised? Is this something, that like the early Church, we should be embarrassed about, and simply just forget?

Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist might seem like a strange thing to celebrate. But celebrate it we do, for it tells us something about our own baptism. We cannot simply separate the baptism of Jesus from the baptism which Jesus instituted for those who believe in him. Jesus was without sin, so he did not need to be baptised. Jesus Christ undergoes baptism not that he may be sanctified



by the waters, but that he may sanctify the waters of our baptism. So that, when we are baptised, we are made clean, we are made holy in the waters made holy by Jesus himself. Just as the baptism of Jesus was a manifestation of God's glory, so too, our own baptism is a manifestation of God's glory. Just as the Father claims Jesus as his son at his baptism, so too, are we claimed as beloved sons and daughters of God when we are baptised. As the Father says to Jesus, so the Father says to us: "This is my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on him." Just as Jesus begins his public ministry at his baptism, so too, we begin our life as Christians at our baptism.

Like all of our celebrations in this season of Christmas, our celebration of the Baptism of Jesus is not an event of long ago which we merely commemorate today. Rather, it is an event of now, an event of today. The baptism of Jesus did happen once. But, it transcends the time to which it belongs. It is an event which belongs to all time. The power of this event, the grace it brings, is present to us today, now, as we speak. It makes present for us the saving plan of God. And we are saved by becoming God's sons and daughters through baptism. And God always wants to save us. Not just yesterday, but today, and forever.

## Prayer of the Faithful

### Introduction

At Jesus' baptism the heavens were opened as the Spirit descended upon Him. As baptised people, we are able to offer these petitions to God as our Father and so we confidently pray.

### Petitions

That our Holy Father, Pope Francis, the Bishops and all who teach the Catholic faith, may be filled with joy as they share the Good News of Jesus Christ,

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

That the Church in Australia may during the preparation for the Plenary Council 2020 listening be truly open to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

That all baptised Christians may effectively lead people to acknowledge Christ as the Son of God.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

That the leaders of nations may resolve conflicts by seeking the justice and peace brought into the world by Jesus.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

That all who are baptised into Christ Jesus may become truly like Him – forgiving, self-sacrificing and live by the law of love.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

That our departed brothers and sisters who have gone before us, marked with the sign of baptism, may enjoy eternal happiness.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

## Conclusion

God our Father, hear our prayers so that with your grace we may always listen to the voice of Jesus, your beloved Son, who was anointed by the Holy Spirit. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Music

by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

### CWB

I bind unto Myself Today. C. F. Alexander/ Traditional Irish Melody. 719

Joy to the World. I. Watts/ G. F. Handel. 728

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry. J. Chandler/ W. Havergal. 780

The Spirit of God. L. Deiss CSSp. 832

The Voice of God. P. Icarus/ W. Greatorex. 835

When Jesus Comes to be Baptised. Stanbrook Abbey. 858

### GA

Baptised in Water. M. Seward/ Gaelic melody. 179

Joy to the World. I. Watts/ G. F. Handel. 295

Praise to You, O Christ our Saviour. B. Farrell. 407

The Spirit of God. L. Deiss CSSp. 185

The Voice of God. P. Icarus/ W. Greatorex. 476

### AOV1

Joy to the World. I. Watts/ G. F. Handel. 170

Praise to You, O Christ our Saviour. B. Farrell. 28

### AOV4Kids

We Are Children of The Living God. K. Sherman CSJ. 15

### Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy

Psalms 28: *The Lord will bless his people with peace.*

Psalms 28: Kathleen Boschetti MSC/Christopher Willcock SJ. CWB 197

Psalms 29 (28): Jenny O'Brien. JOBA pg. 27

The Lord Will Bless His People with Peace: Marty Haugen. LPA pg. 24

### Music selection by Michael Mangan

**Hearts On Fire** (SHOF) [Gathering, Recessional]

**Holy Spirit, Come** (TCS)

**Holy Spirit of Fire** (SHOF)



Come to the  
waters and you  
shall have life.



# 19 January 2020

## Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reflection by Anthony Doran

### Introduction

In the readings of this Sunday, we find something of an extension of last week's Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, for in today's Gospel, John the Baptist proclaims Jesus as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."

### Penitential Act

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you are the Lamb of God.  
Lord have mercy.

You take away the sins of the world.  
Christ have mercy.

You are the Son of the Father.  
Lord have mercy.

### First Reading

#### Isaiah 49:3, 5-6

This Sunday, we read from the Second Song of the Suffering Servant. The mission of this servant is to be a light, not just to Israel and Judah, but to all the nations. The vocation of this servant will be realised in the person and mission of Jesus.

### Second Reading

#### 1 Corinthians 1:1-3

This Sunday, as we begin a long reading of Paul's First Letter to the Christian Church of Corinth over many Sundays, we read a typically Pauline greeting to this Church: that God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send them – and us – grace and peace.

### Gospel Reading

#### John 1:29-34

This Sunday we read John's account of the Baptism of Jesus, with John's witness to Jesus as the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. In this, John echoes the Book of Exodus and identifies Jesus with the Paschal Lamb.

### Reflection

One of the mysterious figures of the Book of the Prophet Isaiah is the figure of the Suffering Servant. And Isaiah's prophecy contains four songs or poems of this Suffering Servant. Today we read part of the second of these songs.

This mysterious servant of whom Isaiah speaks has been chosen by God who formed him "from the womb". His mission is to reunite God's people: "to raise up the tribes of Jacob and restore the survivors of Israel." Moreover, God is going to make of him "a light to the nations" so that God's salvation "may reach to the ends of the earth."

Whatever the historic identity and mission of this servant who is sent, the servant does remain somewhat

mysterious. And his mission is so extraordinary that, in every age, believers have read and re-read this oracle into the present moment of their own history.

From apostolic times, Christians have recognised the features of Christ in those of this mysterious servant of God. The Fourth Gospel sees, in the destiny of Jesus, a realization of the prophecies concerning this servant. Jesus died so that the whole nation may not perish and to gather into one the dispersed children of God.

And so, having heard our First Reading, our ears are primed even further when we listen to our Responsorial Psalm for here surely is the Servant of God coming in obedience to do God's will. As we hear this psalm with its prophetic overtones, punctuated by its refrain, our eyes and ears focus even more intently on the figure of Christ.

In this, we are perhaps like the John the Baptist in today's Gospel Reading: "Seeing Jesus coming towards him..." John, with all of Israel, has waited for the One who was to come. Waited for the Messiah, the Anointed One, the Christ, who was coming to set all Israel free. And now, at last, Jesus comes. And when he sees Jesus coming towards him in today's Gospel, John the Baptist acclaims Jesus as the Lamb of God. This image is a rich one for us.

Yes, John the Baptist uses it for Jesus as he begins his public ministry. And this image, too, reminds us of a gentle baby, lying in the manger in Bethlehem, the baby who is God-with-us, who we celebrated not so many weeks ago.

But surely, too, when we hear talk of the Lamb of God we are reminded of the death of Jesus. Foretold by the prophet Isaiah in the fourth of the songs of the Suffering Servant which we read on Good Friday as the lamb who is led to the slaughter-house, dumb before its shearers, never opening its mouth. And recalled by the apostle Peter as the lamb without spot or stain whose precious blood was the ransom paid to free us from sin. And just before we receive communion, the host will be held up for us and the priest will proclaim, "Behold the Lamb of God..."

But, today, as we begin in earnest our journey in the Ordinary Time of the Church's year, this image invites us to look forwards. Towards the end. To the end of our pilgrimage of discipleship. To see, finally, with the eyes and ears of John the Baptist. To see the end of all time when the consummation of all things has come to pass, and all earth and all heaven joins in adoration of Jesus Christ, the Victorious Lamb of God who is presented to us in the Book of the Apocalypse. Jesus Christ, the victorious Lamb of God who was slain for us that we might have life:

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain  
to receive power and wealth  
and wisdom and might  
and honour and glory and blessing! (Apoc 5:12)

# Prayer of the Faithful

## Introduction

We have been called by Christ, the Lamb of God, to be servants of God and to serve each other, Mindful of this calling, let us ask God to hear our needs as we pray.

## Petitions

For Pope Francis, for our Bishops and clergy, and all members of the Church who are anointed in Baptism, that they live their lives knowing that they are called to be witnesses to the world of Christ's presence among us.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

For our national leaders and those who work for peace and justice to make a better world, that they show leadership in the reconstruction of lives and economies in countries affected by natural disasters and civil unrest.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

For unity among all Christians in seeking God's will, and harmony among all people that we may strive to respect each other's gifts while working as servants of God's Kingdom.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

For our parish community, called in Baptism to proclaim God's praise, that each one of us may grow more prayerful, seeking a deeper relationship with God.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

For the spiritual and physical well-being of all parishioners, that they may show the presence of God to all those they meet in their domestic world, places of learning, or places of work.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all those who have died or are bereaved. May our community continue to reach out in generous support to those who are grieving the loss of loved ones.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

## Conclusion

God, you who revealed your Son as the Lamb who takes away the sins of the world, listen to our prayers so that we may reflect your salvation to the ends of the earth. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Music

by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

### CWB

Alleluia! Sing to Jesus. W. Dix/ R. H. Pritchard. 619  
All People That on Earth Do Dwell. W. Kethe et. al./ Genevan Psalter. 613  
All you nations sing out your joy. L. Deiss CSSp. 616  
Christ is the World's Light. F. P. Green/ Paris Antiphoner. 643  
Church of God. P. Stotter/ M. Daly. 652  
Come Down, O Love Divine. R. F. Little/ R. V. Williams. 653  
Forth in the Peace of Christ We Go. J. Quinn SJ/ O. Gibbons. 681  
In Christ There Is No East or West. J. Oxenham/ H. T. Burleigh. 721  
Lord, be my Vision. M. E. Byrne/ Traditional Irish Melody. 733

Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service. A. Bayly/ Traditional Dutch Melody. 741

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling. C. Wesley/ R. H. Pritchard. 740  
Now Let Us from This Table Rise. F. Kaan/ R. Jackson. 753  
The Church's One Foundation. S. S. Stone/ S. S. Wesley. 819  
The Light of Christ. D. Fishel. 826  
The Voice of God. P. Icarus/ W. Greatorex. 835  
This Day God Gives Me. J. Quinn SJ/ Gaelic Melody. 840

### GA

All People That on Earth Do Dwell. W. Kethe et. al./ Genevan Psalter. 533  
All the Ends of the Earth. R. Dufford SJ. 420  
All you nations sing out your joy. L. Deiss CSSp. 353  
Alleluia! Sing to Jesus. W. Dix/ R. H. Pritchard. 371  
Church of God. P. Stotter/ M. Daly. 480  
Come Down, O Love Divine. R. F. Little/ R. V. Williams. 375  
Forth in the Peace of Christ We Go. J. Quinn SJ/ O. Gibbons. 495  
Here I Am, Lord. D. Schutte. 496  
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling. C. Wesley/ R. H. Pritchard. 463  
O Christ the Great Foundation. S. S. Wesley. 483  
Praise to You, O Christ our Saviour. B. Farrell. 407  
The Church's One Foundation. S. S. Stone/ S. S. Wesley. 484  
The Light of Christ. D. Fishel. 405  
The Voice of God. P. Icarus/ W. Greatorex. 476  
This Day God Gives Me. J. Quinn SJ/ Gaelic Melody. 536

### AOV1

All People That on Earth Do Dwell. W. Kethe et. al./ Genevan Psalter. 25  
All the Ends of the Earth. R. Dufford SJ. 76  
Alleluia! Sing to Jesus. W. Dix/ R. H. Pritchard. 191  
Come Down, O Love Divine. R. F. Little/ R. V. Williams. 118  
Here I Am, Lord. D. Schutte. 90  
Praise to You, O Christ our Saviour. B. Farrell. 28  
The Light of Christ. D. Fishel. 186

### AOV2

You Are Mine. D. Haas. 2

### AOV4Kids

You Are Mine. D. Haas. 5

### Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy

Psalm 39: *Here I am, Lord; I come to do your will.*  
Psalm 39: Kathleen Boschetti MSC/A. Gregory Murray OSB. CWB 352  
Psalm 40 (39): Jenny O'Brien. JOBA pg. 54  
Here am I: Tony Alonso. LPA pg. 80

### Music selection by Michael Mangan

**Sing Out With Joy** (FWS) based on Ps 65 (66) [Gathering,]

**Hearts On Fire** (SHOF) [Gathering, Recessional]

**Holy Spirit, Come** (TCS)

**Holy Spirit of Fire** (SHOF)



*There is the Lamb  
of God who takes  
away the sin of  
the world.* Jn 1:29



# 26 January 2020

## Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reflection by Anthony Doran

### Introduction

Our readings this Sunday begin telling us the story once again of the coming of the Kingdom of God. How our world is changed when Jesus comes. Just like the first disciples who were called by Jesus, are we ready to hear this message with fresh ears? Are we ready to leave our everyday lives and follow Jesus when he calls?

### Penitential Act

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you call us to follow you.  
Lord have mercy.

You are our light and our salvation.  
Christ have mercy.

You came that all might be healed.  
Lord have mercy.

### First Reading

**Isaiah 8:23-9:3**

Isaiah prophesies about the salvation which promised when a new king comes. With the advent of this king shadow gives way to light, the bar of oppression is broken, gladness and joy increase.

### Second Reading

**1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 17**

In today's reading, Paul is appealing to the Corinthian Church to end the disunity which rending their community. Rather than following individual leaders, Paul urges them to be only for Christ.

### Gospel Reading

**Matthew 4:12-23**

With John the Baptist in prison, Jesus' mission comes into its own. He begins by calling his first four disciples, fisherman who will become fishers of men and women for the Kingdom.

### Reflection

Sometimes, it seems as if God gets it wrong. That of all the things God could have done, God just stuffs it up.

Take one look at today's Gospel Reading. Jesus calls as his followers four fishermen. Simon and his brother Andrew; and James and John, the sons of Zebedee. What is going on?

Fishermen, back then, would not have been the most obvious choice for Jesus to choose as his followers. For they would not have been all that educated. Certainly they would have known about tides and climate and the price their catch might bring in. The

sorts of things which we might expect fishermen to know about. But they certainly would not have been the educated elite. Matthew's Gospel doesn't say if Simon and Andrew and James and John were up with the religious elite of their time. I think it is safe to say that they were not.

But Jesus calls these four fishermen to follow him. And not just to follow him, but also to share in his work. To become fishers of men and women.

Now, what are we to make of this? It is tempting to think that God does get it wrong. That if we were in charge, we would have made a better fist of things. But, that is the temptation to look at things with human eyes. And that is a temptation we must avoid.

Actually, God does not get it wrong. God never gets it wrong. Yes, Jesus does call the four fishermen to follow him. But Jesus does not wait for them to be perfect. He calls them as they are. With their imperfections; with all their faults and failings.

And perhaps the more surprising thing is that these fishermen do indeed leave their nets and actually follow Jesus. These fishermen do not wait until they are perfect, until they have it all together before they decide to follow Jesus. They follow Jesus when he calls them.

The story of these four fishermen is also our story. We too are called by Jesus to follow him. And Jesus does not wait until we are perfect. Does not wait until we have it all together and have all the answers. If he did, Christian life would be a bit boring. God calls us in the midst of our life. Whether we are priest or religious or layperson, married or single, young or old, or whatever. We are called to follow Jesus.

When Matthew tells us that Jesus went around teaching in the synagogues and proclaiming the Good News of the kingdom and curing all kinds of diseases and sickness among the people, we get some idea of what the Kingdom is all about.

It is about the in-breaking of God's love into the world. It is about the overcoming of sin and death in all its forms. It is about the victory of God's steadfast and faithful love.

And, like Simon and Andrew and James and John, we are not called just to follow Jesus. Like them we are called to share in the task of proclaiming the Good News of the kingdom. All of us share in this task of proclaiming the Kingdom. Don't think it is a task restricted to bishops and priests. Certainly they have a special role in the task of evangelisation. But they are not the only players.

All of us share in bringing the Kingdom to birth in our time. For it is not just about preaching the Kingdom in words. We preach the Kingdom by what we do far

more eloquently and powerfully than by any words which we may speak. And that is why bishops and priests are never the only players in the evangelisation stakes. All of us are called to proclaim the reign of God's love.

We do this when we hold out our hands to someone in need. We do this when we walk together with our brothers and sisters who may need a helping hand. We do this when others can see the face of Christ in us.

And when these things happen, as our Responsorial Psalm tells us: "we shall see the Lord's goodness in the land of the living."

## Prayer of the Faithful

### Introduction

Just as Peter and Andrew "left their nets" to follow Christ, we gather together to pray for the needs of our Church, for those who are lost, as well as our own community.

### Petitions

We pray for the continual protection of our Church leaders, especially Pope Francis, as they follow the call of God in their lives.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the Church in Australia during the preparations for the Plenary Council 2020. In this listening and discernment stage may we be truly open to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the police force and those who work in the emergency services, that they will be granted the strength to care for those who have suffered injury during this holiday season.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the salvation of the lost, that they may come to know the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the charities within our local community, that they will be blessed in their selfless efforts to help the poor.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

### Conclusion

Gracious Father, we ask that you hear our prayers and grant our petitions, as we continue to humbly seek your face in the poor. We make this prayer in the power of the Spirit, and the name of your Son, our Lord Jesus. **Amen.**

## Music

by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

### CWB

Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation. J. M. Neale et. al./ H. Purcell. 640  
Christ is the world's Light. F. P. Green/ Paris Antiphoner. 643  
Christ, Our Lord, the Prince of Ages. Anon. 644  
Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Come. R. Manus/ T. Tallis. 654  
God Your glory we have seen in Your Son. D. Rimaud et. al/ J. Langlais. 695  
Help of Christians, Guard this Land. R. Connolly. 711  
Lord, Be My Vision. M. E. Byrne et. al/ Irish Melody. 733  
Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service. A. Bayly/ Traditional Dutch Melody. 741  
Praise to the Lord, the Almighty. C. Winkworth/ German Chorale. 792  
The Church's One Foundation. S. S. Stone/ S. S. Wesley. 819  
The Light of Christ. D. Fishel. 826  
The Voice of God. P. Icarus/ W. Greatorex. 835

### GA

Christ, Be Our Light. B. Farrell. 404  
Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation. J. M. Neale et. al./ H. Purcell. 482  
Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Come. R. Manus/ T. Tallis. 376  
God of Peace. A. Kelly CSsR/ C. Willcock SJ. 553  
How Can I Keep from Singing? R. Lowry/ D. Plenn. 454  
I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say. H. Bonar/ R. V. Williams. 468  
Out of Darkness. C. Walker. 504  
Sing Hey for the Carpenter. J. Bell. 508  
The Church's One Foundation. S. S. Stone/ S. S. Wesley. 484  
The Light of Christ. D. Fishel. 405  
The Summons. J. Bell. 502  
The Voice of God. P. Icarus/ W. Greatorex. 476

### AOV1

All that is hidden. B. Farrell. 127  
Be Thou My Vision. M. E. Byrne et. al/ Irish Melody. 9  
I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say. H. Bonar/ R. V. Williams. 54  
Jesus, come to us. D. Haas. 148  
Out of Darkness. C. Walker. 134  
The Light of Christ. D. Fishel. 186

### AOV2

Christ, Be Our Light. B. Farrell. 3  
God of Peace. A. Kelly CSsR/ C. Willcock SJ. 138  
Praise to the Lord, the Almighty. C. Winkworth/ German Chorale. 132  
The Spirit Lives to set us free. D. Lundy/ Unknown. 165

### AOV4Kids

The Spirit Lives to set us free. D. Lundy/ Unknown. 95  
We are children of the Living God. K. Sherman CSJ. 15

### Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy

Psalm 26: *The Lord is my light and my salvation.*  
Psalm 26: Noel Ancell. CWB 63  
Psalm 26: Anon. CWB 330  
Psalm 26: Richard Proulx. CWB 469  
Psalm 27: The Lord Is My Light and My Salvation: Noel Ancell. GA 27  
Psalm 27: Do Not be Afraid/The Lord Is My Light: Christopher Willcock. GA 28  
Psalm 27 (26): Jenny O'Brien. JOBA pg. 57  
The Lord Is My Light: Paul Mason. PM pg. 25  
The Lord is My Light and My Salvation: Tony Alonso. LPA pg. 83

### Music selection by Michael Mangan

Sing New Songs of Joy (FWS/CWBII) based on Ps 97 (98)  
[Gathering, Recessional]  
You Are the Light (FWS) based on Ps 26 (27) [Gathering]  
The Lord Is My Light (LCC) Ps 26/27 (Chn's Lectionary)



# 2 February 2020

## The Presentation of the Lord. (Sunday)

Reflection by Gerard Moore

### Pastoral Note

*The Blessing of Candles and the Procession, proper to today's Mass, would take the place of an introduction to today's Mass. Even if a community does not celebrate this blessing and procession, the introduction in the Roman Missal could be used for this Mass.*

### Introduction

The feast of the Presentation of the Lord in the Temple serves to close of the Christmas readings. It offers a continuation of the story of the life of Jesus with some intriguing insights into the world and customs of Joseph and Mary. Yet its theological intent is stronger. Jesus who is of the Law and the Temple, ultimately will replace the Law and the Temple. He does so steeped in a life of lowliness, poverty and piety, dependent upon the Consolation of God, blessed by holy figures. As a consequence, all religious institutions, be they Temple, priesthood and sacrifice, are measured by their fidelity to the mind and heart of Christ

### Penitential Act

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you are the light of revelation to the nations.  
Lord have mercy.

You are the refiner and the purifier.  
Christ have mercy.

You are the king of glory.  
Lord have mercy.

### First Reading

**Malachi 3:1-4**

The prophet reminds the people of Israel, and more importantly the institutions of Israel, that they too are in need of purification and renewal.

### Second Reading

**Hebrews 2:14-18**

This passage from the Letter to the Hebrews places Christ at the heart of the Temple, the priesthood, our religious institutions and the expiation of sin itself. It is in Christ that we are saved, and it is in Christ that the structures of our faith are built.

### Gospel Reading

**Luke 2:22-40**

The Gospel presents us with the active faith of Joseph and Mary, and the response to the birth of Jesus from two prophetic Temple figures. Jesus, who is raised under the Law, is recognised as the fulfillment of the Law and Temple alike.

### Reflection

The feast of the Presentation continues the scriptural reflection and enunciation of who is this newborn, who is this Jesus of Nazareth, who is this saviour. The gospel story provides the grounds for the feast. Amongst the birth narratives we are introduced to a pair of gentle, ancient souls who prophesy fearlessly and boldly. Enter Simeon and Anna. In a sense, these two match the young parents Joseph and Mary.

The text has three key drivers. With the child brought to the temple we are taught that Jesus is raised in an obedient home, and brought up under the Law of Israel. He is a true child of Israel. He is consecrated to the Lord. He lives under the Law. While soon enough we readers know that this theology will be expanded, particularly by our evangelist Luke, we are reminded that salvation comes out of Israel, and that 'obedience' is part of the life of Jesus from the beginning. Jesus is also from amongst the poor. His piety and maturing are nourished by his experience of being from the poor and their reliance on God alone: the family visited by the Magi (Matthew's Gospel) can bring only a pair of turtledoves or a couple of pigeons.

The second driver is this wonderful old man Simeon. He has been waiting upon God to work at the appointed time. Gifted by the Spirit, he sought the 'consolation of Israel'. Behind this simple saying is the dammed up frustration of the faithful people who found themselves under constant threat for their lives and livelihoods (the Romans and colonial powers), and under difficult recriminations by the religious authorities (the scribes and pharisees). The people were prisoners in their own lands, and at the same time locked out of the world of grace. We can note how Luke is insistent on the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the people at the time, and before the church came forth. So it is no surprise that the Spirit guides him into the Temple itself to find there the holy family. From this meeting comes a beautiful poem, often recited in prayers before retiring for the night.

However, the prophesy is not straightforward. The saving actions of God bring about amazement and astonishment, reflecting something of the pondering that Mary does in her heart. But they will also bring contradiction and deep pain, deep pain that only mothers can feel. The pain is a form of winnowing, so that what is hidden may become seen. There is something here for the faithful to contemplate as they

are thrust into the aftershocks of the abuse scandals. There is hope in this text that the contradiction will lead to the inbreaking of the light and healing of faith.

We see this too in the prophet Anna. Her life did not pan out as expected. Seven years of marriage led to countless decades of loneliness. Yet her salve is found in fasting, prayer and presence in the Temple. Again we are with the poor, and seemingly abandoned. Again we are with an 'outrider' in any discussion of a successful life. Yet she has the insight, and is able to proclaim the message of redemption. She takes the initiative to come forward, recognizes the gift of the child, responds in thanksgiving, and proceeds to proclaim a message of hope being realized.

The reading now returns us to the family unit. In lowliness they had fulfilled the prescriptions of the law, and in some bafflement they return to far away Galilee and their home in Nazareth. They raise their son, and the prophecies begin to make sense: Jesus grows strong, wise and in the favour of God.

The two initial readings hold us to the temple theme. In the poem from the prophet Isaiah we have references to the messenger, the Temple and the purifying. As much as it fits with the feast, it is an unsettling reading. The message of Jesus will be difficult to endure, and in particular the Sons of Levi, the Levitical priesthood, will come under scrutiny. Even as Jesus is presented in the Temple, the prophet Isaiah and the two prophetic figures Simeon and Anna are all presaging a cleansing of the Temple itself.

This is carried forward in the excerpt from the Letter to the Hebrews. The priesthood and sacrifices of the Temple, the very Temple where the Presentation of the Lord took place, is replaced by Christ. In this reading he is understood as the new High Priest, achieved through the incarnation and successful in the expiation of sin. In a sense this text brings the cycle of Christmas readings to a pinnacle: the celebration of the incarnation is the celebration of salvation. This particular reading allows us to know this in terms of the Temple, the priesthood and the sacrifice.

Across the readings there is an ongoing reflection of the cost of discipleship. Even as Joseph and Mary, Simeon and Anna, are obedient in faith and practice, the faith itself will undergo change, and the institutions of practice will undergo purification.

## Prayer of the Faithful

### Introduction

As Mary and Joseph humbly presented Jesus in the Temple, let us, too, humbly bring our petitions before our heavenly Father.

### Petitions

We pray for the Church, that she may always be a temple of the Holy Spirit, able to give life to all those with whom she comes into contact

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the Church in Australia during the preparations for the Plenary Council 2020. In this listening and discernment stage may we be truly open to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the world and for the nations at war. May their leaders work for peace so that injustices committed against the oppressed may cease.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who are suffering, that they can be comforted through the love and care of those who surround them and come to the certain knowledge that their lives are known by the Father.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those gathered here that we may be courageous through the power of the Spirit and go out into the world spreading the good news of the resurrection to all those whom we meet

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

### Conclusion

Heavenly Father accept these prayers and those prayers that remain in our hearts, through the power of the Spirit, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

### Music

by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

#### CWB

Canticle of Simeon. F. Quinn OP. 636

Christ Is The World's Light. F. P. Green/ Paris Antiphoner. 643

Church of God. P. Stotter/ M. Daly. 652

Joy to the World. I. Watts/ G. F. Handel. 728

Of the Father's Love Begotten. J. Mason Neale et. al. 779

Praise the Lord, You Heav'n's Adore Him. E. Osler/ L. V.

Beethoven. 790

Priestly People. L. Deiss. 796

The Light of Christ. D. Fishel. 826

#### GA

Child of Mercy. D. Haas. 292

Christ, Be Our Light. B. Farrell. 404

Church of God. P. Stotter/ M. Daly. 480

Joy to the World. I. Watts/ G. F. Handel. 728

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence. G. Moultrie/ French Carol. 190

Praise the Lord, You Heav'n's Adore Him. E. Osler/ L. V.

Beethoven. 409

Song of Simeon. J. Wood. 301  
The Light of Christ. D. Fishel. 405

**AOV1**

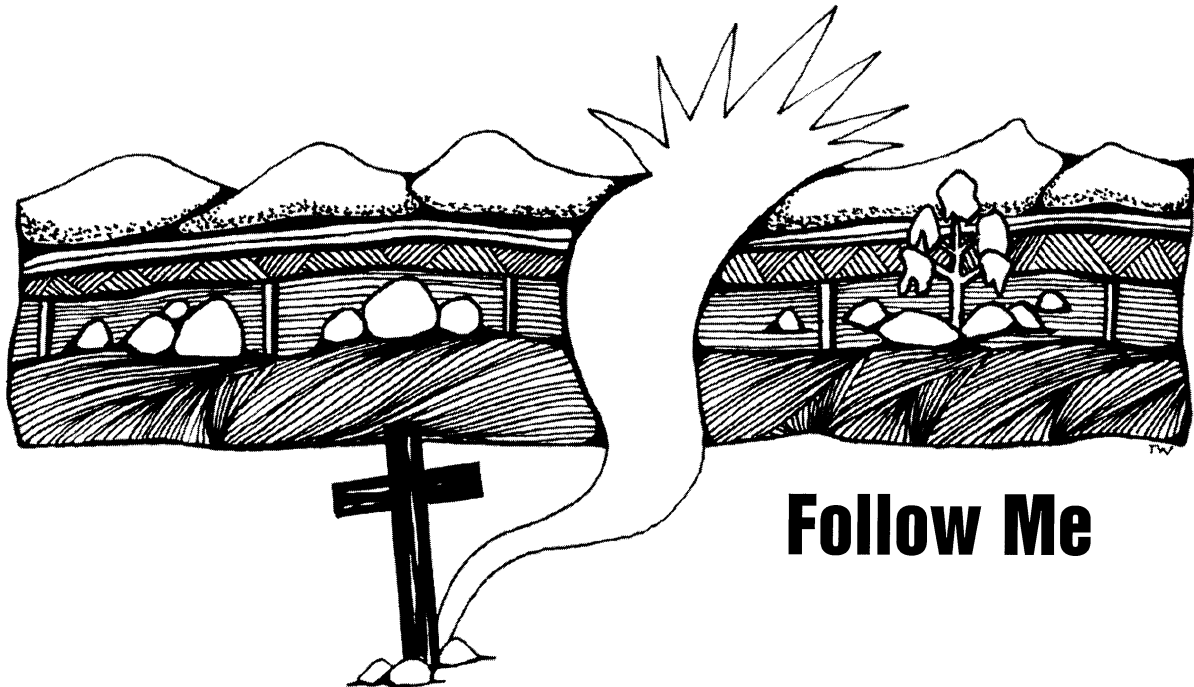
Joy to the World. I. Watts/ G. F. Handel. 728  
The Light of Christ. D. Fishel. 186

**AOV2**

Christ, Be Our Light. B. Farrell. 3

**Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy**

Psalm 23: Who is this king of glory? It is the Lord!  
Psalm 23: T. Barrett Armstrong/Stephen Somerville. CWB 453  
Psalm 24: Jenny O'Brien. JOBF pg. 32  
Who is This King of Glory?: Tony Alonso. LPSF pg. 70







# 9 February 2020

## Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reflection by Anthony Doran

### Pastoral Note

Because of last week's celebration of the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, we did not read the Gospel for the Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, the beginning of Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:1-12). Given this passage's importance for this Gospel and for the Christian life, there would be an argument to add last week's Gospel to this week's Gospel and read both.

### Introduction

All three of our readings this Sunday unfold for us once again something of the mystery of the Kingdom which Jesus brings about. It is bread for the hungry, it is without any show of power; it is salt and light. As disciples called to bring this Kingdom to birth in our time and place, can we hear this challenge with fresh ears and give ourselves to this mission?

### Penitential Act

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you are the light who rises for the upright.  
Lord have mercy.

You are the salt of the earth.  
Christ have mercy.

You are the light of the world.  
Lord have mercy.

### First Reading

#### Isaiah 58:7-10

The new Jerusalem – symbolic of the arrival of the Messiah – comes when we fast for the right reasons – sharing our bread with hungry and sheltering the homeless poor. Then, and only then, does God's light shine in us like the dawn, and darkness and shadow is no more.

### Second Reading

#### 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

Paul reminds the Christians of Corinth of the credentials of his preaching when he was with them: a preaching devoid of any show or power. It is a preaching founded on the power of God, relying only on Christ crucified.

### Gospel Reading

#### Matthew 5:13-16

In a world before electricity, those who first heard Jesus preaching the Sermon on the Mount knew well the value of salt and light. It is more than just flavour and being able to see in the dark. For those of us who also hear this sermon, this is what we are called to be, too.

### Reflection

But for last week's celebration of the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, we would have begun reading the *Sermon on the Mount* from Matthew's Gospel. Last week's Gospel – the Beatitudes – was the introduction to the Sermon on the Mount. This week's Gospel Reading continues and concludes that Introduction.

*"You are the salt of the earth..."* Jesus chooses his metaphor well. For a people who lived long before the advent of refrigeration, they would well have understood well the value of salt. Not only did it add flavour to their cooking. But it was most useful in preserving food as well. And this is what Jesus is challenging us to be. In the Beatitudes, we learn that happiness or blessedness in this world does not equal greatness in the Kingdom of God. Power and wealth and "being first" do not really matter. Rather, true happiness lies in qualities such as gentleness, mercy, purity, and making peace. And those who have heard these words and live their lives characterised by them, are to be *salt for the earth*. We are to be in the world, adding flavour to it. We don't take on the flavour of the world. Rather, we are to change the world, make it different by our living of the Good News of Jesus. We are to be in the world, preserving it and saving it by living our lives by what we have learnt in the Sermon on the Mount.

*"You are the light of the world..."* Again, Jesus chooses his metaphor well. For the people who heard these words of his, knew the value of light. In a world with no electric light, the light of a lamp or torch meant safety and security. The darkness was full of danger and uncertainty. Just as we are to be the salt of the earth, so too, we are to be the light of the world. Because when we do live lives characterised by the Beatitudes, we do light the way for others to follow. We can't live our lives as Christians underneath a tub. No. We must live as an example for others. And seeing the way in which we live, others are indeed drawn to God. And then, truly, they can give praise to God in heaven.

There is also a point in today's Gospel which we can miss. When Jesus says: *"You are the salt of the earth...You are the light of the world"* he is not addressing us as individuals. His address to *"You"* is to us as a community. A fundamental element of our lives as Christians is that we do not do this on our own. We cannot possibly do this on our own. The

way in which we are called to be salt and light for our world is gathered together as the Holy People of God. Gathered together as the Church. On our own, the light which we may be is quite dim, and can be washed out by so many other things. But, when we shine our light together, we do become that city built on the hill-top which cannot be hidden. When we shine our light together, as God's Holy People, the Church does become the new and eternal Jerusalem, the new dwelling place of God's glory. Just as in the same way, when *together* a community acts contrary to the Gospel, by their obstruction, their non-co-operation, their dishonesty, their lack of good faith, they destroy the Kingdom of God, breaking down the fabric of the community of disciples.

Whenever I go to Sydney, I try to make a pilgrimage to North Sydney. To pray at the tomb of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop. Whenever we feel that following Christ is hard; whenever we feel that to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world is just too tall an order to follow, we could look to Mary MacKillop. She lived a life of simple, practical holiness. And indeed lived this life so eloquently that her holiness is now recognised by the Universal Church. One of the ways in which Mary was the salt of the earth and the light of the world was characterised by her saying: "*Never seeing a need without doing something about it.*"

This is not rocket science. As St Paul says in the Second Reading, this is holiness without any show of oratory or philosophy. This is simple, practical everyday holiness. The holiness to which we are all called. The holiness which shines in the sight of the world. And the sort of holiness which others see, and having seen it, give praise to God in heaven.

## Prayer of the Faithful

### Introduction

The Psalmist declares that a light rises in the darkness for the upright. Let us also rise up from the darkness and offer our needs to God.

### Petitions

We pray for the leaders of our Church, that they may be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, and great examples in their faithfulness to God for us all to follow.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the Church in Australia during the preparations for the Plenary Council 2020. In this listening and discernment stage may we be truly open to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the leaders of our country, that they may not be selfish in their actions but rather be selfless in the giving of their lives in service to their communities.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray that the bread which comes from God's creation and is the work of human hands may be shared equally and fairly.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who are alone in the world, especially those without family or friends. We pray that your eternal light may shine on all the recently departed and give comfort to their loved ones.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

## Conclusion

Lord, we offer these prayers to you knowing that you hear our needs and always answer us. We make our prayer in the power of the Spirit and in the name of Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Music

by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

### CWB

Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life. G. Herbert/ R. V. Williams. 656  
Forth in the Peace of Christ We Go. J. Quinn SJ/ O. Gibbons. 681  
God of Mercy and Compassion. M. Hodgetts/ Traditional French Melody. 692  
Lord Whose Love in Humble Service. A. Bayly/ Dutch melody. 741  
O Christ, the Healer we have come. F. Green/ W. Walker. 759  
O come and sing to God, the Lord. J. Hutton. 761  
Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven H. Lyte/ J. Goss. 789  
The Gift of the Holy Spirit. K. Boschetti MSC. 823  
The Living God My Shepherd Is. J. Driscoll SJ/ J. L. Macbeth Bain. 827

### GA

Bring Forth the Kingdom. M. Haugen. 478  
Forth in the Peace of Christ We Go. J. Quinn SJ/ O. Gibbons. 495  
God of Mercy and Compassion. M. Hodgetts/ Traditional French Melody. 302  
I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say. H. Bonar/ R. V. Williams. 468  
Out of Darkness. C. Walker. 504  
Return to God. M. Haugen. 304  
Seek ye First the Kingdom of God. K. Lafferty. 456  
Tree of Life. M. Haugen. 307  
We are called. D. Haas. 514

### AOV1

I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say. H. Bonar/ R. V. Williams. 54  
Out of Darkness. C. Walker. 134  
Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven H. Lyte/ J. Goss. 78  
Seek ye First the Kingdom of God. K. Lafferty. 48

### AOV2

Bring Forth the Kingdom. M. Haugen. 4  
We are called. D. Haas. 60  
You Are Mine. D. Haas. 2

### AOV4Kids

You Are Mine. D. Haas. 5

### Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy

Psalm 111: *A light rises in the darkness for the upright/Alleluia!*

Psalm 111: Anthony Briggs. CWB 361

Psalm 112 (111): Jenny O'Brien. JOBA pg. 58

The Just Man is a Light in the Darkness: Tony Alonso. LPA pg. 89

### Music selection by Michael Mangan

**True Colours Shine** (TCS) *based on Mt 5:14-16* [Gathering, Recessional]

**Taking It To The Streets** (TWB) *based on Mt 5:13-16* [Gathering, Recessional]

**Whatever We Do** (DOM) *based on Mt 25:34-45* [Gifts, Communion]



# 16 February 2020

## Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reflection by Anthony Doran

### Introduction

For most of us, the journey of the Kingdom coming to birth in our time and place is a marathon, not a sprint. We have been on this journey for some weeks already: now we seem to be reaching a steep incline as our three readings this Sunday continue the slow but deliberate unfolding of the mystery of the Kingdom.

### Penitential Act

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you are the wisdom of God.  
Lord have mercy.

You came to complete the Law of God.  
Christ have mercy.

You direct us to the Father.  
Lord have mercy.

### First Reading

#### **Ecclesiasticus 15:15-20**

In this reflection on free will and responsibility, the sage Ben Sira, muses on the choices which have been put before us – for example, fire and water – and that we may put our hand into either. Ultimately, the choices we make are always about life or death.

### Second Reading

#### **1 Corinthians 2:6-10**

Paul continues with his unique preaching to the Christians of Corinth: not a fashionable or trendy philosophy of our age, but a mystery which no eye has seen or ear has heard. This hidden wisdom of God is revealed to us through the Spirit.

### Gospel Reading

#### **Matthew 5:17-37**

Gone it seems are the nice, comforting bits of the Sermon on the Mount! Our Gospel reading today challenges us to aspire to a virtue which is not easy and superficial, but deep and authentic. We see this most clearly and honestly in our relationships with others.

### Reflection

Near where I live, there is a rather flash gelati shop. Dietary considerations aside, I am often mesmerised when I walk in. The array of choices which confronts me is bewildering. Gone, it seems, are the olden days when choices were simple: vanilla, strawberry or chocolate. In any case, with gelati, I tend to be a bit of a purist: I always order limone (or lemon for those who do not speak Italian).

This modern-day conundrum tells us something, just something of one of the fundamental challenges of human existence: the contrast between freedom and responsibility. We have all been given the freedom to make choices in our lives. And yes, this freedom is to make choices about far more important issues than what gelati flavour I want. Do I choose to lead a good life, being kind and fair to others, or do I retreat to the far more comfortable realm of selfishness where I can always be number one. Make no mistake. The choice is real and because it is real, it is difficult. Because almost always, the choice for the good is more difficult than the choice for the bad, the choice for the other way.

Biblical authors were well aware of this challenge. Yeshua Ben Sira – the author of the Book of Ecclesiasticus – reflects on this freedom to choose between good and evil with a potent metaphor: “He has set fire and water before you; put out your hand to whichever you prefer.” It almost seems too simple a choice. Of course, we will choose water. Water – as opposed to fire – will not damage us should we put our hand to it.

But Ben Sira continues. We have life and death before us. Again, the choice seems deceptively simple. We would choose life, of course. Wouldn't we? We say that we choose life, but so often it seems that have not chosen life, because Ben Sira contends that God has never commanded anyone to be godless...[God] has given no one permission to sin. Yet, oftentimes, we still seem to choose the easy way of sin and evil, rather than the path of goodness and holiness. Or even if we think we have not chosen evil, why do we so often find ourselves caught up in sinfulness?

What Ben Sira knows, what Jesus teaches us in the Sermon on the Mount, is that the path to authentic holiness does not lie in the grand, life changing choices we make. Most of us – especially if we are sitting in church this Sunday – have already made the fundamental choice to walk something of the path of holiness. But we give expression to this fundamental choice much more in the small, everyday choices which we make.

In the section of the Sermon on the Mount which we hear today, Jesus challenges us to holiness that

is deep and authentic rather than shallow. Jesus reminds his hearers – those gathered on the Mount and those gathered in this church – that he has come not to abolish the Law, but to complete it. As we will see in next week's First Reading, the Law is never an end in itself. It is always (and only ever) a means to growth in holiness.

All the examples which Jesus uses in today's Gospel revolve around the decisions and choices which we make in regard to our personal relationships, around our interactions with others. In six examples – four of which we hear this week and two further ones which we will hear next week – Jesus teaches us. Each begins with "You have learnt how it was said..." and followed by Jesus stating, "By I say this to you..." Rather than abolishing the Law, Jesus is completing, deepening, and strengthening his disciples' understanding of the Law in the new way of life of the Kingdom: in the new way of life of the Kingdom, anger towards our brother or sister has no place. Murder – the epitome of the breakdown in our relationship with our brother or sister – also has no place. The lustful look and its (often) resultant adultery also has no place. In the new life of the Kingdom, where honesty and respect for the individual are the hallmarks of the disciple, oaths have no place any longer either.

All of these examples – anger towards a neighbor, murder, adultery, and the making oaths – are all concerned – most of the time – with how we treat those closest to us. And surely it is these most intimate of relationships which test us. Which show how deep or otherwise our virtue really goes.

Again and again, the Sermon on the Mount offers to us the charter for a new way of living. A way of living that is radical, yes, but very simple. It is the way of life of the Kingdom. Will you accept this offer? Will you live this life? Will you make this choice?

## Prayer of the Faithful

### Introduction

Our God has prepared blessings for us that are greater than the mind can imagine. Therefore let us bring our needs and the needs of our world before God with confidence.

### Petitions

We pray that the Church and her leaders may clearly proclaim the Gospel of the Lord, and instil into all people the confidence to choose the way of life over the way of death.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the Church in Australia during the preparations for the Plenary Council. In this listening and discernment stage may we be truly open to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray that business leaders may let God's word inform their policies and decisions and guide them to be generous in their service of those in need.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those preparing for the sacrament of marriage that they may find strength and joy in the will of God for them and their families.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray that the sick may experience the consolation of God's strength, and that those who have died may enter into the light of divine glory.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

## Conclusion

Lord we pray that you answer our prayers as we strive to keep faithful to the way of life you have taught us. Through the power of the Spirit and in the name of your Son Jesus Christ, who is Lord forever and ever.

**Amen.**

## Music

by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

### CWB

Forgive our sins. R. Herklots. 680

Grant to us, O Lord. L. Deiss CSSp. 698

Lord of creation, to You be all praise. J. C. Winslow/ Traditional Irish Melody. 739

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling. C. Wesley/ R. H. Pritchard. 740

O God, Your People Gather. A. Nye/ W. H. Monk. 768

Praise to the Holiest in the Height. J. H. Newman/ S. Webbe. 791

Praise the Lord! You Heavens Adore Him. E. Osler/ L. V. Beethoven. 790

The Church of Christ in Ev'ry Age. F. P. Green/ W. Knapp. 818

The Hound of Heaven. C. Willcock SJ. 795

This is my will, my one command. J. Quinn SJ/ Gregorian Chant

Melody. 842

### GA

Eye Has Not Seen. M. Haugen. 466

Grant to us, O Lord. L. Deiss CSSp. 303

Jesus Christ Is Waiting. J. Bell/ French Carol. 507

Here I Am, Lord. D. Schutte. 496

I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say. H. Bonar/ R. V. Williams. 468

Lord of creation, to You be all praise. J. C. Winslow/ Traditional

Irish Melody. 739

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling. C. Wesley/ R. H. Pritchard. 463

Praise to the Holiest in the Height. J. H. Newman/ S. Webbe. 410

Praise the Lord! You Heavens Adore Him. E. Osler/ L. V.

Beethoven. 409

The Hound of Heaven. C. Willcock SJ. 81

This is my will, my one command. J. Quinn SJ/ Gregorian Chant

Melody. 465

We are called. D. Hass. 514

### AOV 1

Eye Has Not Seen. M. Haugen. 146

Here I Am, Lord. D. Schutte. 90

I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say. H. Bonar/ R. V. Williams. 54

### AOV 2

The Hound of Heaven. C. Willcock SJ. 79

We are called. D. Hass. 60

**AOVK**

A Child's Prayer. M. Millward/ D. Halloran. 111  
To Live Like Jesus. M. O'Brien/ D. Pudney. 160  
We Live and Love Your Word. K. Bates SM. 118

**Psalm Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy**

Psalm 118: Happy are they who follow the law of the Lord!  
Psalm 118: Robert J. Batastini/Joseph Gelineau SJ. CWB 364  
Psalm 119 (118): Jenny O'Brien. JOBA pg. 60  
Blessed Are They: Tony Alonso. LPA pg. 92



*God placed fire  
and water before you.*

Ecc 15:16



# 23 February 2020

## Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reflection by Anthony Doran

### Introduction

Today is the last Sunday of Ordinary Time before we begin our journey of Lent. Almost, almost have we finished our reading of Paul's Letter to the Corinthians and Matthew's Sermon the Mount! But we have read enough and learnt enough, too, to know that there is no turning back.

### Penitential Act

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you reveal the wisdom of God.  
Lord have mercy.

You are the perfection of God.  
Christ have mercy.

You came to draw us to the Father.  
Lord have mercy.

### First Reading

**Leviticus 19:1-2, 17-18**

Our First Reading from Leviticus seems to prefigure much of what Jesus teaches us in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew Gospel: that true and authentic holiness is to be found not in adherence to an abstract and objective law, but rather in the plain and simple ways in which we treat our brothers and sisters.

### Second Reading

**1 Corinthians 3:16-23**

In today's Second Reading, Paul returns to an earlier theme of unity in Christ. The Corinthian Church – together as a community – are the temple of God's Spirit. This corporate identity is worthy of far more boasting than any human boasting.

### Gospel Reading

**Matthew 5:38-48**

In today's Gospel, we see more of the 'world-turned-upside-down' wisdom of the Sermon on the Mount. Beginning with the familiar the Law of Retribution – an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth – Jesus reverses the so-called wisdom of this world, calling us ultimately to that holiness which has its origin in God.

### Reflection

Today's First Reading is from the Book of Leviticus. And Leviticus comes from a most privileged part of the Bible. It is one of the five Books of Moses, the first five books in the Hebrew Scriptures. And almost all of the great stories which we know and love from the Hebrew Scriptures come from these five Books of Moses. The stories of the Creation; Noah and the Ark; Abraham, Isaac and Sarah; the Tower of Babel; Moses and the Exodus from Egypt; and the Ten Commandments are all found in these Books.

But all the good stories are from three of these Books: Genesis, Exodus, and Deuteronomy. The fourth book, Numbers, is basically the census records of the People of Israel. And finally, the Book of Leviticus, which is basically the rules and rubrics and regulations for the Levites – the priestly family of Israel.

And because it is a book of rules and rubrics and regulations, we do not read from it very often in the course of our Sunday liturgy, for quite a lot of it is not very exciting or encouraging. Except one part of it. The part from which we read today. Sometimes called the "Code of Legal Holiness." Like the other parts of the Book of Leviticus, it too contains rules and regulations, but more clearly stated than other parts of the book is the reason behind the rules which the People of Israel were to follow. And that is the connection between daily conduct and worship.

And the connection is clear and simple. The People of Israel were to observe these rules in order to grow in holiness. And the more that they would grow in holiness, the closer they come to being like God. The closer they come to sharing in the holiness of God. For the holiness of the people is a reflection of the holiness of God: "Be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy."

And the way that the People of Israel will become holy like the Lord is by loving their neighbour as themselves. By not bearing hatred for their brother or sister in their heart. By not exacting vengeance or bearing a grudge against the children of their people. "Be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy."

Holiness and perfection are often considered close cousins. And there is something of this as we continue to listen to Jesus as he preaches the Sermon on the Mount in today's Gospel.

But gone now, it seems, are the nice bits of the Sermon. The bits about blessedness or happiness, about being salt and light. Today, Jesus challenges his hearers – us included – with what seems impossible: "If anyone hits you on the right cheek, offer him the other as well...If a man...would have your tunic, let him have your cloak as well...Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you..." This is intolerable talk, surely?

Anthropologists and other scientists who have studied human beings and their development talk of there being two basic reactions in the human psyche. Fight or flight. If we do not run away from that which endangers us, we stay and fight it. Fighting that which endangers or opposes us is a basic human reaction.

And that is what makes Jesus' words today so challenging for us. Because we want to punch the lights out of the one who hits us on the right cheek. We don't want to offer our left cheek in return. We want to crush the one who takes our tunic; we don't want to offer him our cloak as well. We want to hurt our enemies, not pray for them, and certainly not love them.

Is what Jesus says to us impossible talk? Is it intolerable language? Well, it is if we try to understand it in terms of human wisdom. If we try to understand it in "the ordinary sense of the word" as St Paul says in the Second Reading. But, there is really nothing ordinary about what Jesus says to us in the Sermon of the Mount. When we hear the Beatitudes, we hear the charter for a new way of living. The way of living of and in the Kingdom of God. A way of living in which true and authentic happiness or blessedness consists of following a life quite contrary to the ways of the world. For the Beatitudes teach us that power and wealth and being first most certainly do not equal greatness in the Kingdom of God. And indeed when we do follow this way of living in the Kingdom, we are indeed salt for the earth, adding flavour to our world and helping God's kingdom to break into our world just a little bit more. When we follow this way of living in the Kingdom, we are indeed the light of the world, showing the path that others can follow as well. In this way, we become signs and bearers of that same Kingdom. A Kingdom where we offer our left cheek after the right has been hit. A Kingdom where we give our cloak as well as our tunic. A Kingdom where enemies are loved, and we pray for those who persecute us.

We follow the way of the Sermon on the Mount as a means to our growing in holiness. And the more that we grow in holiness, the closer we come to being like God. The closer we come to sharing in the holiness of God. For our holiness is nothing other than a reflection of the holiness of God: "Be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy."

## Prayer of the Faithful

### Introduction

In Christ, every spiritual blessing is open to us. Grateful for salvation, we now pray for all the needs of God's people.

## Petitions

That the Church in Australia, may during the preparations for the Plenary Council 2020, be truly open to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

That those who have hurt us, and those that consider themselves our enemies, may be drawn into the grace of God and protected from all evil.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

That God's grace may enable all people to see that even the smallest of children, including those yet unborn, are reflections of His glory and called to be temples of His Holy Spirit.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

That as a community, our work at home, in the world and our education may show others that we live the Christian command of loving our neighbour.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

That the sick may be healed and the deceased may be received into the arms of God's mercy.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

## Conclusion

Father, we offer you these needs and the needs as yet unspoken in our hearts with the full knowledge and confidence that you hear our prayer. We ask this through the power of the Spirit and in the name of Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## Music

by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

### CWB

A New Commandment. Anon. 615

All Creatures of Our God and King. W. H. Draper et. al/ Geistliche Kirchengesang. 618

All People that on Earth Do Dwell. W. Kethe/ Genevan Psalter. 613  
Father of Mercy, God of Consolation. J. Quinn SJ/ D. Mews. 670  
Forgive our sins as we forgive. R. Herklots. 680

God Gives His People Strength. Medical Mission Sisters. 691

In Christ There Is No East or West. J. Oxenham/ H. T. Burleigh. 721  
Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service. A. Bayly/ Traditional Dutch Melody. 741

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling. C. Wesley/ R. H. Pritchard. 740

Make me a channel of your peace. S. Temple. 793

O Breathe on Me, Breath of God. E. Hatch/ Irish Melody. 758

Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven H. Lyte/ J. Goss. 789

Praise to the Lord. C. Winkworth/ German Melody. 792

The Church's One Foundation. S. Stone/ S. Wesley. 819

The Church of Christ in Ev'ry Age. F. P. Green/ W. Knapp. 818

The Gift of the Holy Spirit. K. Boschetti MSC. 823

There's A Wideness in God's Mercy. F. Faber/ Traditional Dutch Melody. 838

This is my will my one command. J. Quinn SJ/ Gregorian Chant. 842

Where There Is Charity and Love. R. Connolly. 863

### GA

A New Commandment. Anon. 318

All Creatures of Our God and King. W. H. Draper et. al/ Geistliche Kirchengesang. 395

All People that on Earth Do Dwell. W. Kethe/ Genevan Psalter. 533

Eye Has Not Seen. M. Haugen. 466

I Heard the voice of Jesus Say. H. Bonar/ R. V. Williams. 468  
 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling. C. Wesley/ R. H. Pritchard. 463  
 Make me a channel of your peace. S. Temple. 490  
 No Greater Love. M. Joncas. 460  
 O Breathe on Me, Breath of God. E. Hatch/ Irish Melody. 432  
 The Church's One Foundation. S. Stone/ S. Wesley. 484  
 The Servant Song. R. Gillard. 487  
 This is my will my one command. J. Quinn SJ/ Gregorian Chant. 465  
 Ubi Caritas. Gregorian Chant. 319  
 Ubi Caritas. Taize. 324  
 We Are Called. D. Haas. 514  
 We Have Been Told. D. Haas. 501  
 Where There Is Charity and Love. R. Connolly. 323

**AOV1**

All People that on Earth Do Dwell. W. Kethe/ Genevan Psalter. 25  
 Eye Has Not Seen. M. Haugen. 146  
 I Heard the voice of Jesus Say. H. Bonar/ R. V. Williams. 54  
 Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven H. Lyte/ J. Goss. 78  
 We Have Been Told. D. Haas. 64  
 Where There Is Love. D. Haas. 87

**AOV2**

Make me a channel of your peace. S. Temple. 126  
 Praise to the Lord. C. Winkworth/ German Melody. 132  
 The Servant Song. R. Gillard. 169  
 We Are Called. D. Haas. 60

**AOVK**

A Child's Prayer. M. Millward/ D. Halloran. 111  
 To Live Like Jesus. M. O'Brien/ D. Pudney. 160  
 We Live and Love Your Word. K. Bates SM. 118

**Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy**

Psalm 102: The Lord is kind and merciful.  
 Psalm 102: Noel Goemanne. CWB 336  
 Psalm 103: The Lord Is Kind and Merciful: Christopher Willcock.  
 GA 61  
 Psalm 103 (102): Jenny O'Brien. JOBA pg. 62  
 The Lord Is Kind and Merciful: Paul Mason. PM pg. 78  
 The Lord is Kind and Merciful: Marty Haugen. LPA pg. 94



Ecc 15:16

You are free  
 to choose fire  
 or water.





# Musicians' Appendix

## Abbreviations and Explanations

PM	Psalms for All Time. Paul Mason© 2007 Paul Mason Published by Willow Publishing Pty Ltd. Sales: info@willowconnection.com.au Paul Mason's website www.liturgicalsong.com
PM	Vol 2 Psalms for All Time: Lectionary psalms for Sundays and Feasts. Paul Mason © 2017 Paul Mason. Published by Liturgical Song.
PFS	Psalms for Feasts and Seasons; Revised and Augmented Full Music Edition Christopher Willcock. Published by Collins Dove. All music copyright © Christopher Willcock SJ 1977, 1990
LPSF	The Lyric Psalter: Revised Grail Lectionary Psalms, Solemnities Feasts and Other Occasions. Music by Tony Alonso and Marty Haugen Published by GIA Publications, Inc. © GIA 2012
LPC	The Lyric Psalter: Revised Grail Lectionary Psalms, Year C Music by Tony Alonso and Marty Haugen Published by GIA Publications, Inc. © GIA 2012
CWB	Catholic Worship Book I Published by Collins and E J Dwyer 1985 © Compilation the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne 1985
CWBII	Catholic Worship Book II Published by Morning Star Publishing 2016 © Compilation the Australian Episcopal Conference of the Australian Catholic Church
AOV1	As One Voice Volume 1. Published by Willow Connection Pty Ltd. © Willow Connection Pty Ltd. 1992
AOV2	As One Voice Volume 2. Published by Willow Connection Pty Ltd. © Willow Connection Pty Ltd.
AOV4Kids	As One Voice Volume 2. Published by Willow Connection Pty Ltd. © Willow Connection Pty Ltd.
AOVNG	As One Voice The Next Generation. © 2009 Willow Publishing Pty Ltd. Email info@willowpublishing.com.au
S&S1	Spirit & Song 1
S&S2	Spirit & Song 2 ©Division of OCP www.spiritandsong.com/ss
GA	Gather Australia. ©1995 by NLMC Publications and GIA Publications Inc.
JOBC	Psalms for the Sundays of Year C (Jenny O'Brien)
JOBF	Psalms for the Easter Triduum and Other Major Feasts (Jenny O'Brien) Published by Jenny O'Brien 1995, reprinted 1998. Copyright © Jenny O'Brien 1995.10 Noble Street, Brighton, SA 5048

### Mass Settings:

Recommended by the Australian Catholics Bishops Conference  
www.catholic.org.au/national-liturgical-council/music  
Mass of St Francis (Paul Taylor – Archbishop's Office for  
Evangelisation. This Mass can be downloaded from  
www.cam.org.au; Orders: Central Catholic Bookshop, Melbourne)  
Mass of Our Lady, Help of Christians (Richard Connolly –  
Publisher: CanticaNova)  
Missa Magis (Christopher Willcock – Publisher: Oregon Catholic  
Press, www.ocp.org)  
Mass of Christ the Redeemer (Bernard Kirkpatrick – Publisher:  
Oregon Catholic Press)  
Mass of Glory and Praise (Paul Mason – Publisher: Willow

Publishing. Available from www.liturgicalsong.com)  
Mass Shalom (C. Smith arr. Mason – Publisher: Willow Publishing.  
Available from www.liturgicalsong.com)  
Missa Cantata (Chant Mass) (arr. Geoffrey Cox – Publisher  
Catholic Truth Society www.stpauls.com.au)  
ICEL Chant Mass. www.icelweb.org/musicfolder/openmusic.php

### FURTHER MATERIAL FROM MICHAEL MANGAN

#### General Gathering Songs: (\* Masses with Children)

COME, LIVE LIFE	LCC
GATHER IN JESUS' NAME	LCC
HEARTS ON FIRE	SHOF
SHOUT OUT WITH JOY (Ps 100)	LCC
SING NEW SONGS OF JOY	FWS
WE REJOICE (PS 122)	SYJ
COME TOGETHER*	GLM/SYJ
CELEBRATE, LET'S CELEBRATE*	TWB
COME GATHER*	GLM
STAND UP*	SHOF
LET THE CHILDREN COME*	LCC

#### General Preparation of Gifts Songs

BLESSED BE GOD	LCC
WE BRING THESE GIFTS	LCC

#### General Communion Songs (\* Masses with Children)

GIVEN FOR YOU*	SHOF
IN MEMORY OF ME*	LCC
IN THE BODY OF CHRIST	LCC
ONE BODY IN CHRIST	TWB
ONE BODY, ONE PEOPLE	SHOF
TAKE AND EAT	TT
THE BREAD OF LIFE	SHOF
WE COME, WE COME	TWB
WE REMEMBER YOU	LCC

#### General Recessionals (\* Masses with Children)

CHOSEN AND SENT	LCC
DO WHAT JESUS DID*	GLM
HEARTS ON FIRE	SHOF
LET'S GO*	TWB
LIVE GOD'S DREAM	LCC
LOVE GOD, LOVE EACH OTHER*	LCC
SING NEW SONGS OF JOY	FWS
TAKING IT TO THE STREETS	TWB
TILL THE END OF TIME*	TT
TRUE COLOURS SHINE*	TCS

#### Collection codes

LCC	<i>Let The Children Come</i>	(2017)
DOM	<i>Doors of Mercy</i>	(2016)
GLM	<i>1,2,3, God Love Me</i>	(2014)
TWB	<i>This We Believe</i>	(2012)
MJC	<i>Mass Jubilee/Celebration</i>	(2011)
TWML	<i>That We Might Live</i>	(2010)
STAR	<i>The Star</i>	(2007)
TCS	<i>True Colours Shine</i>	(2007)
TT	<i>This Is The Time</i>	(2005)
FWS	<i>Forever I Will Sing</i>	(2004)
SHOF	<i>Setting Hearts On Fire</i>	(2001)
SYJ	<i>Sing Your Joy</i>	(1993-97)



## Our Contributors

### Anthony Doran

Anthony Doran is priest of the Archdiocese of Melbourne, currently Parish Priest of Ringwood. Prior to entering the seminary, Anthony was a secondary school teacher, teaching in country and suburban schools in Victoria. Ordained in 2003, he has held various appointments in suburban and country parishes. He completed further studies in Liturgy, focussing on the Rite of Dedication of a Church. He has written for *Liturgy News*, *The Summit* and *The Australian Journal of Liturgy*. He is currently the President of the Australian Academy of Liturgy and a member of Societas Liturgica, the international society for liturgical study and renewal. In 2017, the Archbishop of Melbourne appointed Anthony to the Board of the Catholic Development Fund for the Archdiocese of Melbourne, and as a Commissioner for the Diocesan Pastoral Development Fund. He has undertaken the Foundations of Directorship Course of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and is an Affiliate Member of the AICD.

### Joe Tedesco

Joe Tedesco has been involved in tutoring and teaching theology for over ten years at The University of Notre Dame Australia and at the Centre for Faith Enrichment in the Archdiocese of Perth. He completed masters level studies focusing on scripture and Christian anthropology. He recently completed a thesis in the area of Wisdom Literature and its relationship to moral theology.

### Gerard Moore

Professor Gerard Moore is the Principal and CEO of Broken Bay Institute – the Australian Institute of Theological Education. His most recent publications are *Earth Unites with Heaven: an introduction to the Liturgical Year* (Melbourne: Morning Star 2014), and *The Disciples at the Lord's Table: Prayers over Bread and Cup across 150 Years of Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2015). He is also a member of the Charles Sturt University Public and Contextual Theology Research Centre.

### Thomas O'Loughlin

Thomas O'Loughlin, from Ireland, is Professor of Historical Theology in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies in the University of Nottingham in the UK. His historical work specialized in the evolution of theology and practice in the earliest churches and he has written extensively on both the history of the liturgy and its contemporary renewal. In his recent book, *The Eucharist: Origins and Contemporary Understandings* (London 2015), he argues that we need to rethink our eucharistic practice in a post-denominational world; while his latest book, soon-to-appear from Liturgical Press, *The Rites (and Wrongs) of Liturgy* argues that we need a 'principles' approach to the evaluation of liturgical practice.

### Fiona M. Dyball

Fiona Dyball works extensively in adult and youth faith formation, and in music ministry. She is Music Leader—Voice at Marcellin College in Melbourne and is also a member of the National Liturgical Music Council for the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference. Fiona has tertiary qualifications from Australia and the United States in music performance and choral conducting, music therapy, secondary education, religious education, liturgy and theology.

### Vincent Glynn

Fr Vincent Glynn is a priest of the Archdiocese of Perth WA. His seminary training was completed at St Charles Seminary Guildford WA and St Francis Xavier Seminary Adelaide SA. He was ordained a priest in December 1982. After parish appointments to city and country parishes he was sent to Rome for further studies. In 1991 he completed a Licentiate in Sacramental Theology from the Pontificio Anteneo San Anselmo, Rome. On his return from studies he lectured at St Charles Seminary, the Catholic Institute of Western Australia and The University of Notre Dame Australia. Fr Vincent was the Director of the Maranatha Institute for Adult Faith Education in the Archdiocese of Perth from 1999-2005. Fr Vincent completed and was awarded a Bachelor of Laws degree from The University of Notre Dame Australia, Fremantle, in 2011. He is a theological advisor to the Religious Education team of the Catholic Education Office of WA. He is presently senior lecturer in Sacramental Theology at Notre Dame, Fremantle and a co-editor of Pastoral Liturgy.

## Michael Mangan

Michael is a composer, teacher and music liturgist who is based in Brisbane, Australia. A former specialist music teacher, he has composed over 250 pieces which are widely used in Liturgy and Religious Education programs in schools and parishes throughout Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the USA. His music is published in North America by World Library Publications, Chicago. His compositions are known for their “singability” and suitability for liturgical celebrations, especially with children. Michael tours extensively each year presenting concerts and workshops for students, teachers and parish musicians and speaks at conferences throughout Australasia and North America. His vibrant liturgical leadership sees him regularly engaged as a Musical Director and Liturgy Consultant for major national and international Church and Catholic Education conferences and events. Michael holds a BA (Mus), a Grad Dip Ed (Arts Ed), a Grad Cert Theol (Liturgical Studies) and recently completed a M. Theol (Liturgical Studies). He is a member of the Australian Academy of Liturgy, National Chair of the Australian Pastoral Musicians Network, and Music Director at All Saints Catholic Parish in Brisbane.

## Angela McCarthy

Dr Angela McCarthy is a senior lecturer in theology at The University of Notre Dame Australia, Fremantle campus. Her first degree from Sydney University included work in Biblical Studies and Fine Arts and was followed by the beginnings of a teaching career in Catholic secondary education. After time spent rearing a family, Angela resumed secondary teaching and also further studies in theology and education in 1993 at Notre Dame. Having secured further degrees in education and theology, she was awarded her PhD in 2007. Since then she has completed a further Research Masters in Theology in the field of Scripture, art and theology. Angela has published in the areas of liturgy, icons, art and theology, liturgical music, educational practice and theological aesthetics. She is editor of the Australian Journal of Liturgy, WA convenor for the Australian Academy of Liturgy, Chairperson of the Mandorla Art Award, a member of the Chamber of Arts and Culture WA and the Fellowship of Biblical Studies, and an editor of Pastoral Liturgy.

## Chris deSilva

Dr Chris deSilva is a liturgical musician whose activities include singing, composing, choir direction and parish music ministry. He has served the parish of Bedford/Inglewood in Perth for more than thirty years and is currently involved in both the music ministry and the RCIA process there. He has been the Musical Director of the Julian Singers in Perth for more than fifteen years. As Music Consultant to the Perth Archdiocesan Centre for Liturgy, he supports parish musicians and facilitates music workshops for them. His original compositions are available from his web site, [www.laudamus.com.au](http://www.laudamus.com.au)

## Alessio Loiacono

Alessio Loiacono is a teacher in the Catholic school system in the Archdiocese of Perth, an organist and is also the Music Field Officer for the Centre for Liturgy-Archdiocese of Perth. He also facilitates workshops for Catholic Education Western Australia. He holds a Bachelor of Music Education (UWA) and also a Masters of Religious Education (Notre Dame). Away from music, Alessio enjoys going for walks, coffee and to the movies.

## Peta Wellstead

Peta supported the work of Founding Editor of Pastoral Liturgy, Rev. Dr. Russell Hardiman, for more than 10 years before completing her PhD in 2009. Peta returns to the *Pastoral Liturgy* team for Vol. 50 after working on other academic projects for the past 10 years including Research Fellow at the Key Centre for Ethics, Law, Justice and Governance at Griffith University in Brisbane, Queensland; as editor of the *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* (2013-2018); and as a Lecturer within the School of Information at the University of San Jose in California. Peta's research area is Human Information Behaviour. She has a particular interest in the way that information supports the development of social capital and wellbeing within individuals and communities, including faith communities. When not at her desk Peta likes to be active by snow skiing, playing tennis, hiking and swimming. In quieter moments Peta enjoys reading and classical music.





*The kingdom of heaven  
is like a mustard seed.*

Mt 13:31

### **Artwork**

This issue also includes artwork by Tricia Walsh. Her beautiful and clear graphical style is published in two books, *Graphics and Prayers for Feasts and Seasons* and *Graphics and Prayers for Ordinary Time*, both published by John Garratt Publishing. © Used with permission of the publisher.



## **Notes to Contributors**

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or by email as an attachment in Word or RTF format to [pastoral.liturgy@nd.edu.au](mailto:pastoral.liturgy@nd.edu.au)

Manuscripts should be typed and double-spaced in Chicago 16 A referencing style.

Authors should retain a copy of manuscripts for checking and correcting purposes.

Notes and references should be included as endnotes.

Authors are asked to submit autobiographical notes and credentials with papers.

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