

Christmas Day Mass 2023

The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) Day

25 December

First Reading *Is 52:7-10*

A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

How beautiful on the mountains,
are the feet of one who brings good news,
who heralds peace, brings happiness,
proclaims salvation,
and tells Zion,
'Your God is king!'

Listen! Your watchmen raise their voices,
they shout for joy together,
for they see the Lord face to face,
as he returns to Zion.

Break into shouts of joy together,
you ruins of Jerusalem;
for the Lord is consoling his people,
redeeming Jerusalem.

The Lord bares his holy arm
in the sight of all the nations,
and all the ends of the earth shall see
the salvation of our God.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm *Ps 97:1-6 R.v.3*

**(R.) All the ends of the earth have
seen the saving power of God.**

1. Sing a new song to the Lord
for he has worked wonders.
His right hand and his holy arm
have brought salvation. **(R.)**
2. The Lord has made known his salvation;
has shown his justice to the nations.
He has remembered his truth and love
for the house of Israel. **(R.)**
3. All the ends of the earth have seen
the salvation of our God.
Shout to the Lord all the earth,
ring out your joy. **(R.)**
4. Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp,
with the sound of music.
With trumpets and the sound of the horn
acclaim the King, the Lord. **(R.)**

Second Reading *Heb 1:1-6*

A Reading from the Letter to the Hebrews.

At various times in the past and in various different ways, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets; but in our own time, the last days, he has spoken to us through his Son, the Son that he has appointed to inherit everything and through whom he made everything there is. He is the radiant light of God's glory and the perfect copy of his nature, sustaining the universe by his powerful command; and now that he has destroyed the defilement of sin, he has gone to take his place in heaven at the right hand of divine Majesty. So he is now as far above the angels as the title which he has inherited is higher than their own name.

God has never said to any angel: You are my Son, today I have become your father, or: I will be a father to him and he a son to me. Again, when he brings the First-born into the world, he says: Let all the angels of God worship him.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

A holy day has dawned upon us.

**Come you nations and adore the Lord,
Today a great light has come upon
the earth. Alleluia!**

Gospel *Jn 1-1:18*

The Lord be with you. And with your spirit.

✠ *The beginning of the Holy Gospel according to John.*

Glory to you, O Lord.

In the beginning was the Word:
the Word was with God
and the Word was God.
He was with God in the beginning.
Through him all things came to be,
not one thing had its being but through him.
All that came to be had life in him
and that life was the light of all
people, a light that shines in the
dark, a light that darkness could
not overpower.

The Word was the true light
that enlightens everyone;
and was coming into the world.
He was in the world
that had its being through him,
yet the world did not know him.
He came to his own domain
and his own people did not accept him.
But to all who did accept him
he gave power to become children of God,
to all who believe in the name of him
who was born, not out of human stock
or of the will of the flesh,
or of the will of man,
but of God himself.

And the Word became flesh,
and lived among us,
and we have seen his glory,
the glory as of the Father's only Son,
full of grace and truth.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



Reflection by *Dianne Bergant CSA*

Today the Christmas celebration gains a new depth of theological meaning. At midnight, the birth in history was proclaimed. At dawn, the initiative of God's gift was declared, and the community's joyful gratitude was announced. In this third celebration, the identity of Christ and the new way of life that he brings is announced.

If our eyes are open and alert, we can see that God has won a victory for us, one that is tangible and realised in our midst. It is an overwhelming victory, one that permanently conquers the enemy. This victory has a profound impact on every place, every time and every people. The birth of the infant, the king in David's line, promises salvation to all who long for it. This salvation is a new vision of wisdom, one that has been realised in Christ, God's agent of grace in the world. It is a new world, one of inclusivity and of righteous honour. It is a new age, one that is ushered in by the child who is leading a victory procession.

Ultimately, only eyes of faith allow us to see the fullness of God's revelation. The glory of the infant king is the very presence of God made flesh. Jesus is the eternal incarnate Word who has pitched his tent among us. Ours is not a distant God; the incarnate wisdom of God is among us, and we are called to a change of heart that will allow us to see this wonder.

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St Stephen was the first deacon chosen by the apostles soon after the death and resurrection of Jesus. He took care of the needs of Greek-speaking widows among the Christian community in Jerusalem, and he was also known as a zealous preacher. But his preaching was considered blasphemy by the Jewish council, and he was stoned to death in c.35 AD. Stephen became the first martyr for Christ and even as they threw stones at him, he asked God to forgive his attackers for their sins.

Wordsearch

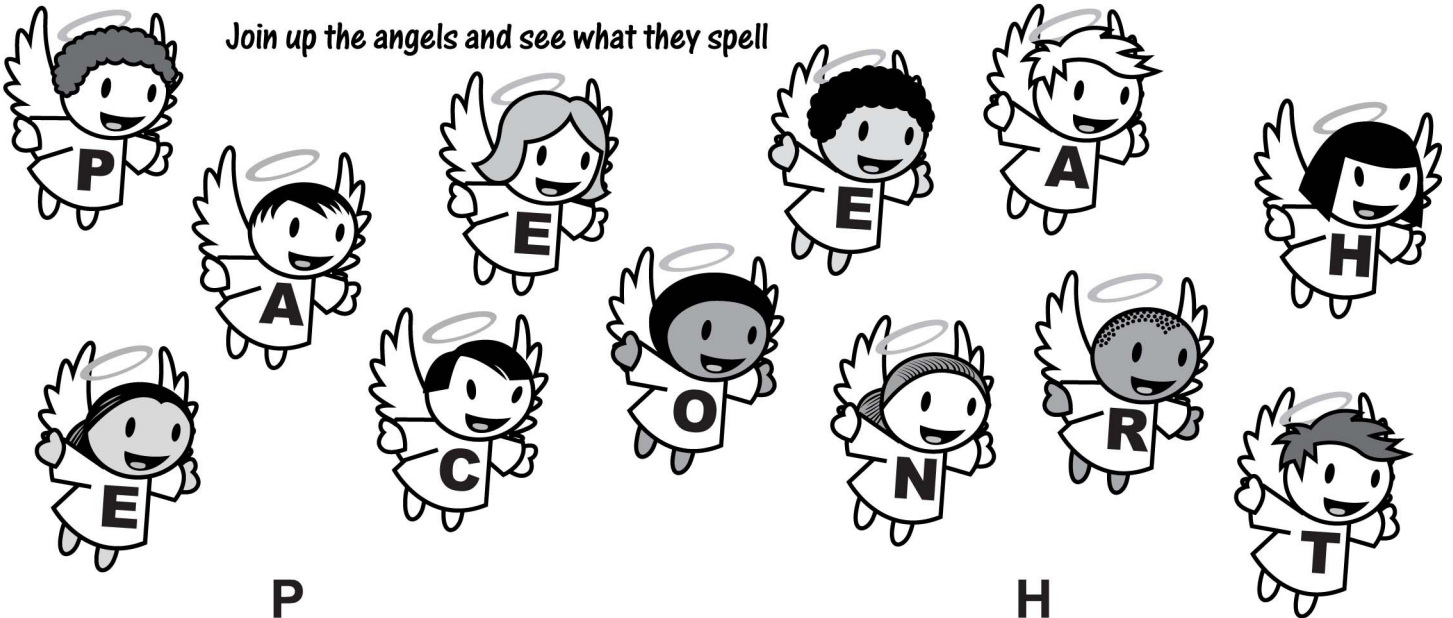
Try to find these words:

- angels
- happy
- Joseph
- peace
- Christ
- inn
- manger
- sheep
- engaged
- Jesus
- Nazareth
- travelled



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Join up the angels and see what they spell



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