



## Gospel Lk 2:1-14

*Today a saviour has been born for you.*

Caesar Augustus issued a decree for a census of the whole world to be taken. This census – the first – took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria, and everyone went to his own town to be registered. So Joseph set out from the town of Nazareth in Galilee and travelled up to Judaea, to the town of David called Bethlehem, since he was of David's House and line, in order to be registered together with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to a son, her first-born. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger because there was no room for them at the inn. In the countryside close by there were shepherds who lived in the fields and took it in turns to watch their flocks during the night. The angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone round them. They were terrified, but the angel said, 'Do not be afraid. Listen, I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared by the whole people. Today in the town of David a saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. And here is a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.' And suddenly with the angel there was a great throng of the heavenly host, praising God and singing:

'Glory to God in the highest heaven  
and peace to men who enjoy his favour.'

## Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

The glory of God and profound peace reaching out to embrace the whole of humanity are dynamically related in the baby in the manger. This is the song of the angels, and it is our privilege to join in that song at this Christmas Mass.

Every baby is a promise of a new future which fills one with hope. But *this* baby is unique. *This* Jewish boy baby is the body language of God. *This* baby is the sonburst of God entering our dark world. *This* baby shows us that God is not impossibly remote but, rather, God is as intimately close as a vulnerable infant.

And *this* baby fulfils all the yearning of the human heart. We want to love to the utmost. We want to be loved to the utmost. *This* baby enables both because he is without any finite boundaries or restraints: He is in-finite love reaching out to us.

Can we grasp all this? Probably not. So, like the little lambs nuzzling up to the manger, we just follow some deep intuition which says: 'I must kneel in adoration, it is good to be here.' We could pause for a moment to pray for the resolve to do our bit to echo the angel's message: 'I bring you good news of great joy to be shared by *all* peoples.'

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# The Living Word

**Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) Midnight**

**25 December 2020**

## First Reading Is 9:1-7

*A son is given to us.*

The people that walked in darkness  
has seen a great light;  
on those who live in a land of deep shadow  
a light has shone.  
You have made their gladness greater,  
you have made their joy increase;  
they rejoice in your presence  
as men rejoice at harvest time,  
as men are happy when they are dividing the spoils.  
For the yoke that was weighing on him,  
the bar across his shoulders,  
the rod of his oppressor,  
these you break as on the day of Midian.  
For all the footgear of battle,  
every cloak rolled in blood,  
is burnt  
and consumed by fire.  
For there is a child born for us,  
a son given to us  
and dominion is laid on his shoulders;  
and this is the name they give him:  
Wonder-Counsellor, Mighty-God,  
Eternal-Father, Prince-of-Peace.  
Wide is his dominion  
in a peace that has no end,  
for the throne of David  
and for his royal power,  
which he establishes and makes secure  
in justice and integrity.  
From this time onwards and for ever,  
the jealous love of the Lord of hosts will do this.

## Responsorial Psalm

**Ps 95:1-3. 11-13 R. Lk 2:11**

*(R.) Today is born our Saviour,  
Christ the Lord.*

1. O sing a new song to the Lord,  
sing to the Lord all the earth.  
O sing to the Lord, bless his name. *(R.)*

2. Proclaim his help day by day,  
tell among the nations his glory  
and his wonders among all the peoples. *(R.)*
3. Let the heavens rejoice and earth be glad,  
let the sea and all within it thunder praise,  
let the land and all it bears rejoice,  
all the trees of the wood shout for joy  
at the presence of the Lord for he comes,  
he comes to rule the earth. *(R.)*
4. With justice he will rule the world,  
he will judge the peoples with his truth *(R.)*

## Second Reading Ti 2:11-14

*God's grace has been revealed to all people.*

God's grace has been revealed, and it has made salvation possible for the whole human race and taught us that what we have to do is to give up everything that does not lead to God, and all our worldly ambitions; we must be self-restrained and live good and religious lives here in this present world, while we are waiting in hope for the blessing which will come with the Appearing of the glory of our great God and saviour Christ Jesus. He sacrificed himself for us in order to set us free from all wickedness and to purify a people so that it could be his very own and would have no ambition except to do good.

## Gospel Acclamation Lk 2:10-11

*Alleluia, alleluia!*

*Good News and great joy to all  
the world:*

*today is born our Saviour, Christ  
the Lord.*

*Alleluia!*



## Gospel Lk 2:15-20

*The shepherds found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger.*

Now when the angels had gone from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us.' So they hurried away and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. When they saw the child they repeated what they had been told about him, and everyone who heard it was astonished at what the shepherds had to say. As for Mary, she treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds went back glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen; it was exactly as they had been told.

## Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

The glory of God and profound peace reaching out to embrace the whole of humanity are dynamically related in the baby in the manger. This is the song of the angels, and it is our privilege to join in that song at this Christmas Mass.

Every baby is a promise of a new future which fills one with hope. But *this* baby is unique. *This* Jewish boy baby is the body language of God. *This* baby is the sonburst of God entering our dark world. *This* baby shows us that God is not impossibly remote but, rather, God is as intimately close as a vulnerable infant.

And *this* baby fulfils all the yearning of the human heart. We want to love to the utmost. We want to be loved to the utmost. *This* baby enables both because he is without any finite boundaries or restraints: He is in-finite love reaching out to us.

Can we grasp all this? Probably not. So, like the little lambs nuzzling up to the manger, we just follow some deep intuition which says: 'I must kneel in adoration, it is good to be here.' We could pause for a moment to pray for the resolve to do our bit to echo the angel's message: 'I bring you good news of great joy to be shared by *all* peoples.'

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# The Living Word

**Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) Dawn**

**25 December 2020**

## First Reading Is 62:11-12

*Your Saviour is born.*

This the Lord proclaims to the ends of the earth:

Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Look, your saviour comes, the prize of his victory with him, his trophies before him'. They shall be called 'The Holy People', 'The Lord's Redeemed'. And you shall be called 'The-sought-after', 'City-not-forsaken.'

## Responsorial Psalm

**Ps 96:1. 6. 11-12**

*(R.) A light will shine on us this day: the Lord is born for us.*

1. The Lord is king, let earth rejoice, the many coastlands be glad. The skies proclaim his justice; all the peoples see his glory. *(R.)*
2. Light shines forth for the just and joy for the upright of heart. Rejoice, you just, in the Lord; give glory to his holy name. *(R.)*

## Second Reading Ti 3:4-7

*His own compassion saved us.*

When the kindness and love of God our saviour for mankind were revealed, it was not because he was concerned with any righteous actions we might have done ourselves; it was for no reason except his own compassion that he saved us, by means of the cleansing water of rebirth and by renewing us with the Holy Spirit which he has so generously poured over us through Jesus Christ our saviour. He did this so that we should be justified by his grace, to become heirs looking forward to inheriting eternal life.

## Gospel Acclamation Lk 2:14

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

**Glory to God in the highest, peace to his people on earth.**

**Alleluia!**

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## Gospel Jn 1:1-18

(or Shorter Form Jn 1:1-5. 9-14)

*The Word of God became flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw his glory.*

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 men,  
a light that shines in the dark,  
a light that darkness could not overpower.

The Word was the true light  
that enlightens all men;  
and he was coming into the world.  
He was in the world  
that had its being through him,  
and 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 urge of the flesh  
or will of man  
but of God himself.  
The Word was made flesh,  
he lived among us.  
And we saw his glory,  
the glory that is his as the only Son of the Father,  
full of grace and truth.

## Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

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# The Living Word

**The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) Day**

**25 December 2020**

## First Reading Is 52:7-10

*All the ends of the earth shall see the saving power of our God.*

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.

## Responsorial 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

*In our own time, God speaks to us through his Son.*

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.

## 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 Mt 1:18-25**  
(or Longer Form Mt 1:1-25)

*Mary will give birth to a son and you will name him Jesus.*

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a man of honour and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to divorce her informally. He had made up his mind to do this when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.' Now all this took place to fulfil the words spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

The Virgin will conceive and give birth  
to a son  
and they will call him Emmanuel,

a name which means 'God-is-with-us'. When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord told him to do: he took his wife to his home and, though he had not had intercourse with her, she gave birth to a son; and he named him Jesus.

**Reflection** by Fr Michael Tate

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# The Living Word

**Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) Vigil**

**25 December 2020**

**First Reading Is 62:1-5**

*The Lord takes delight in you.*

About Zion I will not be silent,  
about Jerusalem I will not grow weary,  
until her integrity shines out like the dawn  
and her salvation flames like a torch.  
The nations then will see your integrity,  
all the kings your glory,  
and you will be called by a new name,  
one which the mouth of the Lord will confer.  
You are to be a crown of splendour in the hand  
of the Lord,  
a princely diadem in the hand of your God;  
no longer are you to be named 'Forsaken',  
nor your land 'Abandoned',  
but you shall be called 'My Delight'  
and your land 'The Wedded';  
for the Lord takes delight in you  
and your land will have its wedding.  
Like a young man marrying a virgin,  
so will the one who built you wed you,  
and as the bridegroom rejoices in his bride,  
so will your God rejoice in you.

**Responsorial Psalm**

**Ps 88:4-5. 16-17. 27. 29 R. see v.2**

**(R.) For ever I will sing the goodness  
of the Lord.**

1. 'I have made a covenant with my chosen one;  
I have sworn to David my servant:  
I will establish your dynasty for ever  
and set up your throne through all ages.' (R.)
2. Happy the people who acclaim such a king,  
who walk, O Lord, in the light of your face,  
who find their joy every day in your name,  
who make your justice the source of their  
bliss. (R.)

3. 'He will say to me: "You are my father,  
my God, the rock who saves me."  
I will keep my love for him always;  
for him my covenant shall endure.' (R.)

**Second Reading Acts 13:16-17. 22-25**

*Paul spoke of Christ, the son of David.*

When Paul reached Antioch in Pisidia, he stood up in the synagogue, held up a hand for silence and began to speak:

'Men of Israel, and fearers of God, listen! The God of our nation Israel chose our ancestors, and made our people great when they were living as foreigners in Egypt; then by divine power he led them out.

'Then he made David their king, of whom he approved in these words, "I have selected David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart, who will carry out my whole purpose". To keep his promise, God has raised up for Israel one of David's descendants, Jesus, as Saviour, whose coming was heralded by John when he proclaimed a baptism of repentance for the whole people of Israel. Before John ended his career he said, "I am not the one you imagine me to be; that one is coming after me and I am not fit to undo his sandal".'

**Gospel Acclamation Mt 1:1-25**

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

**Tomorrow the wickedness of the  
earth will be destroyed:**

**the Saviour of the world will be our king.  
Alleluia!**