

THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH

**The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us,
and we saw His glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son,
full of grace and truth.**

John 1:14

PRESENCE of GOD

As we celebrate the coming of the Lord Jesus, let us pause and remember that our God, Emmanuel, is here with us.

God's Word has come among us as quiet and simplicity.

God's Word has come among us as mercy in peace.

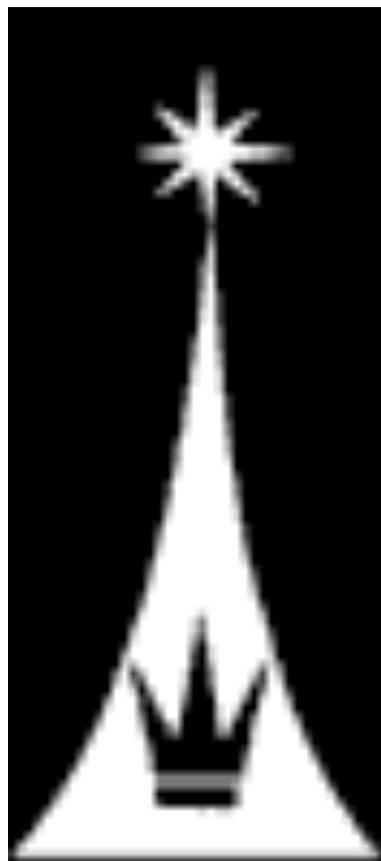
In this time of rejoicing, let us praise and thank our God for Jesus' birth and mission, and commit ourselves afresh to the liberating mission of the Word. All glory and honor to You, O Triune God: Father Creator, Redeeming Son, and Life-giving Holy Spirit. Amen.

HYMN:

**O Come All Ye Faithful
Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem.
Come and behold Him,
Born the King of Angels;
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.**

**O Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing all that hear in heaven God's holy Word.
Give to our Father glory in the Highest;
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.**

**All Hail! Lord, we greet Thee,
Born this happy morning,
O Jesus! for evermore be Thy name adored.
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing;
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.**



PRAYER BEFORE THE SCRIPTURE READING

Open your ears, O Christian people. Open your ears and hear the Good News.

Open your hearts, O royal people. Open your hearts and receive the Good News.

Out of God's mercy, the Word was born into our family.

ISAIAH 9:1 – 5

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great Light;
Upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a Light has shone.
You have brought them abundant joy and great rejoicing, as they rejoice before you as at the harvest, as people make merry when dividing spoils. For the yoke that burdened them, the pole on their shoulder, and the rod of their taskmaster you have smashed, as on the day of Midian. For every boot that tramped in battle, every cloak rolled in blood, will be burned as fuel for flames.

For a Child is born to us, a son is given us; upon His shoulder dominion rests. They name Him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace.

PSALM 96

Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth.
Sing to the Lord, bless His name; announce His salvation day after day.
Tell God's glory among the nations;
among all peoples, God's marvelous deeds.
For great is the Lord and highly to be praised
Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice;
let the sea and what fills it resound;
let the plains be joyful and all that is in them.
Then let all the trees of the forest rejoice before the Lord
Who comes to govern the earth,
to govern the world with justice and the peoples with faithfulness.

JOHN 1:1 – 14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God.

All things came to be through Him, and without Him nothing came to be.
What came to be through Him was life, and this life was the Light of the human race; the Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

He was in the world, and the world came to be through Him, but the world did not know Him. He came to what was His own, but His own people did not accept Him.

But to those who did accept Him He gave power to become children of God, to those who believe in His name, who were born not by natural generation nor by human choice nor by a man's decision but of God. And the Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.

REFLECTION

Christmas is a personal invitation to each one of us to move from the darkness of sin in the secret places of our lives to light, hope, joy, peace and celebration.

Christmas is a personal invitation to each of us to rejoice and sing, and to allow the Holy Spirit Who caused the Word to be born of Mary, to dance in our hearts.

Christmas is a personal invitation to each of us to join Jesus as Wonder-Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Word and Promoter of Peace in transforming our world from darkness to light, from sadness to joy.

Christmas is a personal invitation to us to recognize our unique gift of life-givers and preservers and to ensure that God's gift of life is protected and revered.

A CHRISTMAS PSALM

**We are travelers on the road to seek you today:
the stories of Christmas are stories of journeys.**

**Mary and Joseph had to travel to Bethlehem:
the Holy Family were pilgrims before Christ could come.**

**The shepherds decided to go and see:
working people went to find where God was at work.**

**Wise men followed the pointing star:
kings from far away seeking truth from above.**

**Christ still comes to us where we are:
but we also must seek Him in response to His love,**

**Our journey may begin at any time or place:
You will lead the way for us and You will sustain us.**

**So help us travel our own road of faith:
that we may see for ourselves, and believe in You.**

LITANY

Savior of the world, born in a stable, cradled in a manger and nurtured by Mary and Joseph, we commend to you during this Christmas season all of our loved ones. We especially remember the lonely, the shut-ins, the bereaved, those in fractured and flawed relationships; those who are refugees, prisoners; those who are forced to serve in unjust wars; the homeless, the unemployed, the widow and the orphan. We plead:

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|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| Peace of God | be harmony in families |
| Mercy of God | be compassion to the addicted |
| Calm of God | be tranquility to the troubled |
| Love of God | be care for the neglected |
| Bliss of God | be joy to the sorrowful |
| Hope of God | be optimism to the doubtful |
| Way of God | be a sure path for the lost |
| Truth of God | be confidence to the abandoned |
| Light of God | be illumination to the hesitant |
| Son of God | be brother to those in war zones |
| Face of God | be joy to those with dementia |
| Image of God | be reflected in all our behavior |
| Hospitality of God | be welcome to the rejected |
| Healing of God | be life to the sick and the dying |
| Homelessness of God | be home to the excluded |
| Harmony of God | be reconciliation to the repentant |
| Gentleness of God | be tenderness to the frightened |
| Forgiveness of God | be peace in places of conflict |
| Freedom of God | be liberation to the oppressed |
| Integrity of God | be the conscience of all |
| Justice of God | be truth in all our dealings |
| Silence of God | be the tongue of the voiceless |
| Stillness of God | be our serenity |
| Word of God | be the Gospel to all seekers |
| Glory of God | be peace on earth |
| Salvation of God | be paradise for all peoples |

Glory to You, Source of All Life, Living Word, and Spirit of Life.
As it was, is now, and forever will be. Amen.

BLESSING

May the peace and love of Jesus, our Emmanuel, be with us this Christmas season.

May the brightness of the star, the joy of the shepherds and the music of the angels be ours.

May Jesus be reborn in our hearts and lives this Christmas season.

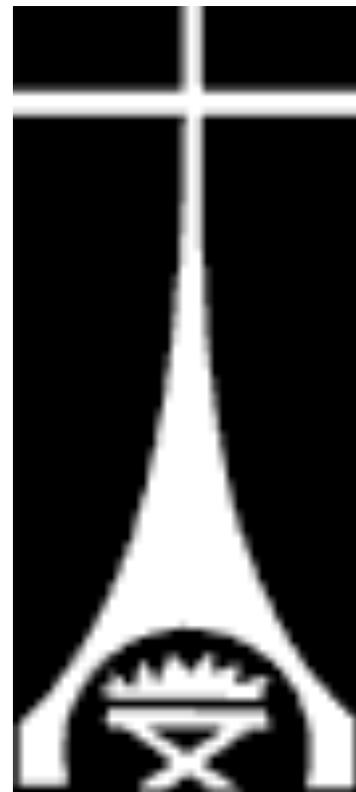
May the One Who is Mercy bless us in the name of our God Who created us, in the name of Jesus Who came among us, and in the name of the Spirit most Holy Who calls us to life, to holiness and creativity. Amen.

HYMN

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

Why lies He in such mean estate,
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,
The cross be borne for me, for you.
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

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



Out of God's mercy, the Word was born into our human family.

We have seen His radiance in the eyes of others.

**We recommit ourselves to being Your compassionate face
in all our relationships and in our work.**

**Saint John Baptist de La Salle
and all you holy Brothers who have gone before us,
intercede that we may open our hearts to the Lord Jesus
and allow Him to dwell therein.**

**Live Jesus in our hearts.
Forever!**

**Now, Lord, You let Your servant go in peace:
Your Word has been fulfilled.**

**My own eyes have seen the salvation
which You have prepared in the sight of every
people;**

**A Light to reveal You to the nations
and the glory of Your people Israel.**

Luke 2: 29



Br. Joseph Hiep, FSC

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