

Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord [Christmas]

† Saturday 25 December 2021

Midnight – First Mass of Christmas



Cycle of Prayer: Expectant mothers, migrants, refugees and human life

Keynote: Joy! For the child is born who brings hope to the downtrodden

Prophet Isaiah 9: 1-7

'The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light... you have made their joy increase; they rejoice in your presence... for there is child born for us... wide is his dominion in a peace that has no end'. This night a light dawns upon the earth, weapons of war are now to be put aside, and the people are to enter an era of peace. 'For there is a child born for us, a son given to us... and this is his name... Wonder-Counsellor, Mighty-God, Eternal-Father, Prince-of-Peace.' It is God that is doing this to fulfil the promise. God keeps the Covenant with the faithful People of God. They, and we are glad, for we share in this promise of peace!

Responsorial Psalm 95 (96) – a song of praise to the Lord of all

Letter of Paul to Titus 2: 11-14

'God's grace has been revealed, and it has made salvation possible for the whole human race,' writes the apostle. Paul urges us to put aside worldly ambition and all that does not lead us in the Way of God, for the Lord has come among us, to set us free, and to bring healing. Paul invites us to make it our only ambition to do good, *'We must be self-restrained and live good religious lives here in this present world, while we are waiting for the blessing which will come'*.

Gospel according to Luke 2: 1-14

Luke in setting the historical scene tells us *'Joseph set out from his own town of Nazareth... to the town of David called, Bethlehem... with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there... she gave birth to a son'*. Then the evangelist relates how the Good News of the birth of the promised Messiah, is made known. The first to be told are not as we might expect mighty kings, nor even rich princes or the powerful important people. Instead, unexpectedly, the news is made known to certain poor shepherds, who were despised folk, treated as unwelcome outcasts, like refugees, gypsy travellers, or homeless people in our own time. But this news is for everyone, maybe especially for the outcasts and poor! *'Listen, I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared by the whole people. Today... a saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord'*.

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Note

Texts for the Mass at Dawn and the Mass of the Day are also available