



THE LORD'S DAY AT HOME

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH (B) Sunday 27th December 2020

If you are housebound or self-isolating at this time, please use these prayers to unite yourself with the worship of the Universal Church, and your own Parish this Sunday. If alone, read or say these prayers quietly to yourself. If with another, or in a family, someone should read the "leader" parts, and others respond. It might be suitable to find a special, quiet place at home for your Sunday prayers.

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon

A: The shepherds went in haste, and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant lying in a manger.

Sign of the Cross

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

A: Amen.

Introduction

L: Christmas is a Season, not a day, and the feasts that fill the next couple of weeks keep us focussed on the coming of Jesus into our human flesh, into our world. Today we leave Bethlehem to travel to Jerusalem and then on to Nazareth, as we follow the earliest years of the child's growth. Remarkable things happen as he makes the first of many visits to the Temple in Jerusalem, as Simeon and Anna see beyond the appearance of a baby in his parents' arms, to recognise the coming of the Promised Messiah, the Saviour. Let us pray that we too may recognise Jesus as our Saviour, and acclaim his glory as the angels did on the night of his birth, saying:

Gloria

A: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Opening Prayer

L: Let us pray.

O God, who were pleased to give us the shining example of the Holy Family, graciously grant that we may imitate them in practising the virtues of family life and in the bonds of charity, and so, in the joy of your house, delight one day in eternal rewards. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

A: Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Gospel Reading Luke 2:22-40

When the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, the parents of Jesus took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, – observing what stands written in the Law of the Lord: *Every first-born male must be consecrated to the Lord* – and also to offer in sacrifice, in accordance with what is said in the Law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons. Now in Jerusalem there was a man named Simeon. He was an upright and devout man; he looked forward to Israel's comforting and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had set eyes on the Christ of the Lord. Prompted by the Spirit he came to the Temple and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law required, he took him into his arms and blessed God; and he said: 'Now, Master, you can let your servant go in peace, just as you promised; because my eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared for all the nations to see, a light to enlighten the pagans and the glory of your people Israel.' As the child's father and mother stood there wondering at the things that were being said about him, Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his

mother, 'You see this child: he is destined for the fall and for the rising of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is rejected – and a sword will pierce your own soul too – so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare.' There was a prophetess also, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was well on in years. Her days of girlhood over, she had been married for seven years before becoming a widow. She was now eighty-four years old and never left the Temple, serving God night and day with fasting and prayer. She came by just at that moment and began to praise God; and she spoke of the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem. When they had done everything the Law of the Lord required, they went back to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. Meanwhile the child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and God's favour was with him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

A: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Reflection

The "Season of Christmas" would better be called the "Season of Epiphany or Revealing", since over the next two weeks we have a set of feasts which show the "unfolding" of the mystery, of the answer to one simple question: just WHO IS this baby born in Bethlehem? It started on Christmas Night, when the angels announced to shepherds that the baby born down in the village was their saviour. It continues today, as Simeon and Anna recognise who this baby is – salvation and light and deliverance! There are more "revelations" about this child to come – to wise men from the East and in the waters of the river Jordan at his Baptism – as this Season unfolds. As we continue to think of Christ's coming among us, let us ask ourselves what we recognise in him: how is he our salvation, our light and our deliverance?

For our Younger Friends

It's still Christmas! You should sing "The Twelve Days of Christmas" and work out where we are now (hint: today is three turtle doves!) Do you know it will still be Christmas when you go back to school? It doesn't end until January 6th next year! We have a lot of Christmas in Church because we have a lot to think about. It's not just about a baby born in Bethlehem, but about our God coming to be with us, to share our life! What does this mean to you?

If gathering as a family, perhaps now continue to discuss what this Gospel passage means to you. If alone, think about what key message you take from the Scriptures today.

Profession of Faith

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

Intercessions

L: The love of God has burst forth in the coming of Christ. Let us pray that the church, a family of faith, will abide in love.

L: That our worship of God and celebration of the Saviour's birth will deepen our bonds of unity as brothers and sisters in faith. Lord, in your mercy ...

A: Hear our prayer.

L: That the mutual love of husband and wife will be a source of security and blessing for their children. Lord, in your mercy ...

A: Hear our prayer.

L: That adult children will clothe their elderly parents with kindness, respect, and care. Lord, in your mercy ...

A: Hear our prayer.

L: That family harmony will be safeguarded through each member's willingness to be an instrument of peace and goodwill. Lord, in your mercy ...

A: Hear our prayer.

Please add your own prayers for the needs of the Church, the world and your local community. You may wish to add particular prayers for family members, friends or neighbours in need at this time.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

L: At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

A: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

L: We offer you, Lord, the sacrifice of conciliation, humbly asking that, through the intercession of the Virgin Mother of God and Saint Joseph, you may establish our families firmly in your grace and your peace. Through Christ our Lord.

A: Amen.

Before Spiritual Communion

L: Loving Father, through Jesus Christ your Son, the holy exchange that restores our life has shone forth today in splendour: when our frailty is assumed by your Word not only does human mortality receive unending honour but by this wondrous union we, too, are made eternal. To complete this mystery of salvation, at the Last Supper he showed the fullness of your love, as he gave his Body and Blood for his people. Even though we are not in Church, and not able to receive communion today, we open our minds and hearts now to your generous love and the gift of Jesus your Son, welcoming him spiritually into our lives.

Spiritual Communion

A: My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Holy Sacrament of the altar. I love you above all things and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my soul

so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and forever. Amen.

Pause for a moment of silent prayer and reflection.

Thanksgiving Psalm

L: He, the Lord, is our God. He remembers his covenant for ever.

A: He, the Lord, is our God. He remembers his covenant for ever.

L: Give thanks to the Lord, tell his name, make known his deeds among the peoples.

O sing to him, sing his praise; tell all his wonderful works!

A: He, the Lord, is our God. He remembers his covenant for ever.

L: Be proud of his holy name, let the hearts that seek the Lord rejoice.

Consider the Lord and his strength; constantly seek his face.

A: He, the Lord, is our God. He remembers his covenant for ever.

L: Remember the wonders he has done, his miracles, the judgements he spoke.

O children of Abraham, his servant, O sons of the Jacob he chose.

A: He, the Lord, is our God. He remembers his covenant for ever.

L: He remembers his covenant for ever, his promise for a thousand generations, the covenant he made with Abraham, the oath he swore to Isaac.

A: He, the Lord, is our God. He remembers his covenant for ever.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

Final Prayer and Blessing

L: Let us pray.

Bring those you refresh with this heavenly Sacrament, most merciful Father, to imitate constantly the example of the Holy Family, so that, after the trials of this world, we may share their company for ever. Through Christ our Lord.

A: Amen.

L: May the Lord ✠ bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

A: Amen.

L: Let us bless the Lord!

A: Thanks be to God!