

## Feast of the Holy Family - December 26, 2021

### **Opening Song – Hark! the Herald Angels Sing**

Hark! the herald angels sing: "Glory to the newborn King;  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies;  
With angelic hosts proclaim: "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

***Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King."***

Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord;  
Late in time, behold him come, offspring of a virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see! Hail the incarnate Deity!  
Pleased as man with us to dwell; Jesus, our Emmanuel!

***Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King."***

### **Sign of Cross and Greeting**

#### **Reflection**

Reader 1: Remembering the Holy Family as our model, let us recall their marginalization. Like so many, the Holy Family, too, encountered ridicule for being different. In remembering them, help us lift up and celebrate all loving families. May we be generous in spirit, compassion, forgiveness, and love.

Reader 2: We pray, with our siblings in faith, for all families...For LGBT families. Families of different abilities. Interracial families. Extended families. Dysfunctional families. Refugee families. Multi-generational families. Families of multiple faiths. Single parent families. Families of religious communities. Blended and adopted families. Traditional families. Multi-cultural families. Families by choice. Our families.

***All: For these and all the communities of love in our world, let us pray for an increase in love amongst our global community. Amen.***

Call to Action (Adapted Kathleen Gibbons Schuck)

### **Opening Prayer**

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading** – From ***a Genealogy of Jesus Christ*** compiled by Ann Patrick Ware. (Adapted KGS)

There are fourteen generations between Sarah and David's mother; fourteen more generations between Bathsheba and the Babylonian deportation; and fourteen more generations between the Babylonian deportation and Miriam, the mother of Christ. That's a total of forty-two generations.

A genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of Miriam, the daughter of Anna:  
Sarah was the mother of Isaac, and Rebekah was the mother of Jacob,  
Leah was the mother of Judah, Tamar was the mother of Perez. The names of the mothers of Hezron, Ram, Amminadab, Nahshon, and Salmon have been lost. Rahab was the mother of Boaz, and Ruth was the mother of Obed. Obed's wife, whose name is unknown, bore Jesse.

The wife of Jesse was the mother of David.

Bathsheba was the mother of Solomon, Naamah, the Ammonite, was the mother of Rehoboam. Maacah was the mother of Abijam and the grandmother of Asa. Azubah was the mother of Jehoshaphat. The name of Jeroram's mother is unknown. Athaliah was the mother of Ahaziah, Zibiah of Beersheba, the mother of Joash. Jecoliah of Jerusalem bore Uzziah, Jerusha bore Jotham; Ahaz's mother is unknown. Abi was the mother of Hezekiah, Hephzibah was the mother of Manasseh, Meshullemeth was the mother of Amon, Jedidah was the mother of Josiah. Zebidah was the mother of Jehoiakim, Nehushta was the mother of Jehoiachin, Hamutal was the mother of Zedekiah. Then the deportation of Babylon took place.

After the deportation of Babylon, the names of the mothers go unrecorded. These are their sons: Jechoniah, Shealtiel, Zerubbabel, Abiud, Eliakim, Azor and Zadok, Achim, Eliud, Eleazar, Matthan, Jacob, and Joseph, the husband of Miriam. Of her was born Jesus who is called Christ.

Wisdom inspired by our God. **Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm Response** - Love triumphs over fear! Psalm 20 by Merrill

May the Great Birther who created you in wholeness, comfort you when you call!  
May the Name of Love be your protection and rise up in your heart as a tower of strength!  
May all you have given in gratitude and with open hands be returned to you a hundred-fold!  
May your heart's desires and all of Love's plans for you be fulfilled in due season!

***Love triumphs over fear!***

Let us shout for joy as Love triumphs over fear; Let our thankful hearts sing in loud acclamation to the Beloved, who answers our heartfelt prayers for well-being.  
Now I know that Love comes to all who open their hearts,  
And dwells therein, offering gifts of peace and harmony.

***Love triumphs over fear!***

Some may boast of wealth and personal power; they will stumble and fall.  
Let us boast of the One who comes in the Name of Love; We shall rise up strong and sure.

***Love triumphs over fear!***

O Beloved, You who created us, You bless us with your Love,  
For you are the Divine Guest dwelling within our hearts.

***Love triumphs over fear!***

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading** – Colossians 3:12-17

Because you are God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with heartfelt compassion, with kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Bear with one another; forgive whatever grievances you have against one another – forgive in the same way God has forgiven you. Above all else, put on love, which binds the rest together and makes them

perfect. Let Christ's peace reign in your hearts since, as members of one body, you have been called to that peace. Dedicate yourselves to thankfulness. Let the Word of Christ, rich as it is, dwell in you. Instruct and admonish one another wisely. Sing gratefully to God from your hearts in psalms, hymns and songs of the Spirit. And whatever you do, whether in speech or in action, do it in the name of Jesus our Savior, giving thanks to God through Christ.

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

### **Gospel Acclamation - Alleluia Give the Glory**

**Gospel** - Our God be with you. **And also with you.**

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke. **Glory to you, O God.** Luke 2:22-40

When the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, the couple took Jesus up to Jerusalem and presented him to God. For it is written in the Law of God, "Every heir is to be consecrated to God." They likewise came to offer in sacrifice "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons," in accord with the dictate of the Law of God.

Now there lived in Jerusalem a man named Simeon. He was devout and just, filled with the Holy Spirit and looking forward to the consolation of Israel. It had been revealed to Simeon by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had seen the Messiah of God. Prompted by the Spirit, Simeon came to the Temple; and when the parents brought in the child to perform the customary rituals of the Law, Simeon took the child in his arms and praised God, saying,

Now, O God, You can dismiss Your servant in peace, just as You promised; because my eyes have seen the salvation which You have prepared for all the peoples to see- a light of revelation to the nations, and the glory of Your people Israel.

As the child's mother and father stood there marveling at the things that were being said, Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother, "This child is destined to be the downfall and the rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that is rejected, so that the secrets thoughts of many may be laid bare. And a sword will pierce your heart as well."

There was a certain prophet, Anna by name, begot of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old. Her youth long passed, she had lived with her husband for seven years and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the Temple, worshipping day and night, fasting and praying. Coming up at that moment, she gave thanks to God and talked about the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem.

When the couple had fulfilled all the prescriptions of the Law of God, they returned to Galilee and their own town of Nazareth. The child grew in size and strength. He was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was with him.

The Good News of Salvation! **Praise to you, Jesus the Christ!**

**Homily response** – You are invited to share your thoughts on the readings or the homily itself. Please remember the **ABCs** of sharing - please be **Audible, Brief, and Christ-centered** and base your comments on the readings and homily.

**A Christmas Creed** - (Society for the Confluence of World Festivals and Celebrations – adapted Caryl Conroy Johnson)

I believe in Jesus the Christ and in the beauty of the gospel begun in Bethlehem. I believe in the One whose spirit glorified a little town; and whose spirit still brings music to persons all over the world, in towns both large and small. I believe in the One whom the rulers of the earth ignored and the proud could never understand: whose life was among common people, whose welcome came from persons of hungry hearts. I believe in the One who proclaimed the love of God to be invincible: I believe in the One whose cradle was a mother's arms, whose modest home in Nazareth had love for its only wealth, and who looked at persons and made them see what God's love saw in them. I believe in God, who lovingly embraces humanity and I believe in Jesus, who fully embraced his humanity and fully enfleshed God for me and for the world. Amen.

**Prayers of the People Response - *Loving God, hear our prayer.***

*(After Gifts have been offered)* - Our table has been set. Let us now pray that these gifts and the gift of our lives may be acceptable to our loving God.

***All - Holy One, accept these gifts from our hands for the praise and glory of your name, for our good and the good of all your people.***

**Eucharistic Prayer** – Praying a New Story, Michael Morwood, p. 64-69 adapted KGS

Our God is with you. ***And also with you. Lift up your hearts. We lift them up to our God.***

Let us give thanks to our loving God. ***It is right to give God thanks and praise.***

We believe in an Ultimate Reality, a reality beyond our words and beyond our images, a reality that grounds and sustains everything that exists. Filled with gratitude, we now say with heartfelt joy:

***Holy, holy, holy God, Spirit of love and of peace. Heaven and earth are full of your glory; Hosanna in the highest. Blessed the One who comes in the name of our God, Hosanna in the highest.***

All our collected human wisdom is a visible expression of this Reality, active for millions of years in human development - active in all places, at all times, in individuals and cultures, seeking expression in leaving the world better than we found it.

***As Christians we rejoice in the birth of Jesus. In him we see the fullness of human possibility: to make God visible in our lives. In him we have seen the Ultimate Reality come to expression in human form.***

Like each of us he grew in wisdom as he aged. He questioned, he searched for meaning, he shaped his convictions, he experienced love and came to know love's connectedness with his God. He stood firmly in his own religious tradition and preached good news to all people dreaming of a better humanity.

***We rejoice that his teaching sets us free from imagining a manipulative, intervening God and from thinking we are distant from the Reality in which our very existence is grounded.***

*(All extend hands)* Here, now, God comes to visible expression in each of us. And so, you who are Love, we recognize your Spirit alive and at work in this bread and wine, and *in us*. We open ourselves to *Your Spirit*, who transforms these gifts to become *You in us*, the body and blood of Jesus.

***The bread - Take this all of you and eat. This is my body, given up for you. When you break bread together, remember me.***

***The cup - Take this all of you and drink. This is my blood, the new covenant of God-with-you. When you drink from this cup, remember me.***

As we eat and drink, we commit ourselves to allow the Spirit of generosity that took flesh and moved so boldly in Jesus to move in our lives.

We rejoice that Jesus led people to discover the sacred in the ordinary; that his teaching set us free to believe that we live in God and that God lives and comes to wonderful expression in us.

We give thanks for God being with us in the love of family and friends, in the circumstances of our lives now, and in whatever the future holds for us.

Our Christmas prayer is that we may recognize and actively acknowledge the presence of the sacred in places we are reluctant to look:

- in the stables of our own lives;
- among the downtrodden in our society;
- in refugees, and all those we see as different from us.

***May we recognize God-in-us and give generous expression to this wonderful gift we all share.***

**Doxology** - Together we pray

***Through Christ, may all creation be one. With Christ, may all divisions be healed. In the unity of the Holy Spirit, may all glory and honor be yours, forever and ever. Amen.*** *(sung)*

**Prayer of Jesus - Our Father by Joe Wise**

***Our Father, you are in heaven; our Mother, you call us home;  
Our Brother, you are the first there, our Sister, your kingdom come.***

***Our Father, you are in my heart, our Mother, I love your name,  
Our Brother, you love us so much, our Sister, we do the same.  
Forgive us all, the things we do; that break the chain of hands with you.  
Give us this day our daily bread and hold us close Just like you said.***

***Our Father, you are in heaven; our Mother, you call us home;  
Our Brother, you are the first there, our Sister, your kingdom come.***

***Our Father, our Brother, our Sister, our Mother, our God.***

## **Sign of Peace**

**Invitation to Communion** - This is Jesus, who models love and frees us to be our best selves; Whose Spirit liberates, heals and transforms us and our world. Come and be nourished at this table, where all are welcome.

***Jesus, you make us worthy to receive you, and by your word we are healed.***

Receive who you are – the body and blood of Christ. **Amen.**

## **Communion Song – Away in a Manger**

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;  
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes, but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes;  
I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky, and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask thee to stay close by me forever, and love me, I pray;  
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care, and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

## **Prayer after Communion – Now the Work of Christmas Begins** by Howard Thurman

When the song of the angels is stilled,  
when the star in the sky is gone,  
when the kings and princes are home,  
when the shepherds are back with their flocks,  
the work of Christmas begins:

to find the lost, to heal the broken, to feed the hungry,  
to release the prisoner, to rebuild the nations,  
to bring peace among the people,  
to make music in the heart.

## **Announcements**

### **Blessing**

May God bless us with forgiving hearts. **Amen.**

May God bless us with generous spirits. **Amen.**

May God bless us with peace. **Amen.**

We ask this in the name of Love, Love Creating, Love Incarnating, and Love which makes all things new. **Amen!**

Go and be peace in the world.

## **Closing Song – O Come, All Ye Faithful**

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!***

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation, sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above!

Glory to God, all 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!***