

**ST MARY'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
NORTH MELBOURNE**



**CHRISTMAS EVE 2020
MIDNIGHT MASS**

11.30PM

CHRISTMAS TO EPIPHANY

Welcome to St Mary's North Melbourne for this celebration of the birth of Our Lord.

Christmas is the most joyous time of the Christian year, as we celebrate God coming to live amongst us in the form of Jesus Christ.

The date that Jesus was born is not known. However, St Luke's Gospel tells us that Jesus was born while Quirinius was Governor of Syria.

Christmas came to be celebrated by the Church on 25 December, the same day the pagan Romans celebrated the Winter Solstice, which symbolised the re-birth of the Sun. Since the fourth century, the Church has kept 25 December as the day to celebrate the birth of the Son of Righteousness – Jesus Christ.

Prior to the adoption of 25 December as the celebration of Christmas, Christians celebrated the birth of Jesus on 6 January – the day on which Epiphany is now observed. The word Epiphany means 'revelation' – for Christians in the Western Tradition, this is the day on which the Wise Men came to visit the infant Jesus. For many Christians in the Orthodox traditions, Christmas is celebrated on 7 January – the day after Epiphany.

The services of Christmas and Epiphany are enjoyed for the cheerful singing of well-loved Christmas hymns, known as carols.

We hope that, through inspirational worship and beautiful music, you may be brought closer to God, and that you may have a happy and joyous Christmas with your hearts full of love and peace.

CHRISTMAS MIDNIGHT EUCHARIST

*Please join us in singing the hymns while keeping your mask on and saying those parts of the service printed in **bold** type.*

'Eucharist' means 'thanksgiving', and in our fellowship together through this service we hope you may be brought closer to the real presence of God.

Please note that incense is used during the Midnight Eucharist as a symbol of prayer and blessing.

Celebrant and Preacher

Fr Jan Joustra, Vicar

Organist

Beverley Phillips, Director of Music

Cantor

Andrew Murray

Please ensure that your mobile phone is switched off.

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INTRODUCTION

The Gospel of the birth of Jesus calls us to question and reassess our values.

We pray for the courage to do so. May our Christmas be filled with love: given and received unconditionally. May our lives reflect the unconditional love of our God, who has entered our lives with the birth of Jesus.

Christmas is not simply a time for rejoicing because of the birth of Jesus. It is a time for recalling that God has been made known to us in Jesus; and it is a time for recognising that we can find the lasting happiness we seek by trying to live and love as Jesus did.

A BELL RINGS AS A SIGNAL FOR ALL TO STAND AS THE SERVICE BEGINS

THE BLESSING OF THE CRIB

Dear friends, as we meet to celebrate the birth of Christ, let us pray that God will bless this crib, that all who worship his Son, born of the Virgin Mary, may come to share his life in glory.

God our Father, on this night your Son Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary for us and for our salvation; bless this crib which we have prepared to celebrate that holy birth;

may all who see it be strengthened in faith, and receive the fullness of life he came to bring; who is alive and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

THE GREETING

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

Amen.

Peace be with you.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

**Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

Christ, the light of the world, has come to dispel the darkness of our hearts. In his light, let us examine ourselves and confess our sins.

Silence is kept

Lord of grace and truth, we confess our unworthiness to stand in your presence as your children.

We have sinned:

Forgive and heal us.

The Virgin Mary accepted your call to be the mother of Jesus.

Forgive our disobedience to your will.

We have sinned:

Forgive and heal us.

Your Son, our Saviour, was born in poverty in a manger.

Forgive our greed and rejection of your ways.

We have sinned:

Forgive and heal us.

The shepherds left their flocks to go to Bethlehem.

Forgive our self-interest and lack of vision.

We have sinned:

Forgive and heal us.

The Wise Men followed the star to find Jesus the King.
Forgive our reluctance to seek you.
We have sinned:
Forgive and heal us.

THE ABSOLUTION

May God, who loved the world so much that he sent his Son to be our Saviour, forgive you your sins and make you holy to serve him in the world, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

GLORIA

**Glory to God in the highest and peace to God's people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your
glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of
God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our
prayer.**

**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.**

THE COLLECT

**Eternal God,
who made this most holy night to shine
with the brightness of your one true light:
bring us, who have known the revelation of that light on
earth,
to see the radiance of your heavenly glory;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.**

THE FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onwards and for evermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

(Isaiah 9:2–7)

For the word of the Lord:
Thanks be to God.

Psalm 96

Response:

TIS 54

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. The melody starts with a quarter rest, followed by quarter notes G4, A4, and B4, each with an accent (>). The second measure contains a dotted quarter note G4, an eighth note A4, and a quarter note B4. The third measure contains a dotted quarter note G4, an eighth note A4, and a quarter note B4. The second staff follows the same pattern, starting with a quarter rest, quarter notes G4, A4, and B4 (all accented), followed by the same dotted quarter and eighth note patterns. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

To - day is born a Sa - viour, Christ the Lord;
to - day is born a Sa - viour, Christ the Lord.

O sing a new song to the Lord, sing to the Lord all the earth.
O sing to the Lord, bless the Lord's name. ***Response***

Proclaim God's mercy day by day. Tell the Lord's glory among the nations, and wonders among the peoples. ***Response***

Let heaven and earth rejoice and be glad, the sea and its creatures thunder praise, the land and its fruit show forth their joy. ***Response***

Let trees and forests shout for joy at the presence of God, for the Lord is come, at the presence of God who rules the earth.
Response

*tr. from The Psalms, A New Translation (1989)
Psalm verses by permission A. P. Watt, London
Response text © 1991, Christopher Willcock S. J.
Music © 1975, 1991, Christopher Willcock S. J.*

THE SECOND READING

A reading from the Epistle of Paul to Titus.

The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

(Titus 2:11-14)

For the word of the Lord:

Thanks be to God.

Please turn to face the Gospel as it is proclaimed.

GOSPEL READING

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Good News and great joy to all the world:
today is born our Saviour, Christ the Lord.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

A reading from the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered, this was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord.

This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.’ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!’

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.’ So they went with haste and found Mary

and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. (Luke 2: 1-20)

This is the Gospel of Christ.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

THE SERMON—FR JAN JOUSTRA

THE CREED

Let us declare our faith in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
We proclaim the Church's faith in Jesus Christ.

**We believe and declare that our Lord Jesus Christ,
the Son of God, is both divine and human.**

God, of the being of the Father,
the only Son from before time began;
human from the being of his mother, born in the world;
**fully God and fully human;
human in both mind and body.**

As God he is equal to the Father,
as human he is less than the Father.

**Although he is both divine and human
he is not two beings but one Christ.**

One, not by turning God into flesh,
but by taking humanity into God;
**truly one, not by mixing humanity with Godhead,
but by being one person.**

For as mind and body form one human being

so the one Christ is both divine and human.

**The Word became flesh and lived among us;
we have seen his glory,
the glory of the only Son from the Father,
full of grace and truth.**

from the Athanasian Creed

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given. Wonderful Counsellor, give your wisdom to the leaders of the nations. We pray for those who seek to bring peace and justice to your people. We pray that you will turn the hearts of all those who make for war.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Mighty God, make the whole world know that the government is on your shoulders. We pray for our political leaders and we pray for wise government.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Everlasting Father, establish your reign of justice and righteousness for ever. We pray for all who suffer in this world because of war, civil strife, persecution and poverty. We pray for all agencies of healing, praying especially for the work of the United Nations and all its agencies.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Prince of Peace, bring in the endless kingdom of your peace. We particularly pray for the peoples of the Holy Land, Palestinians and Israelis, Christians, Jews and Muslims that they may be a sign of reconciliation to the world and live together in your peace.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Holy God, bring us all to your heavenly city, to the joyful gathering of thousands of angels, to the assembly of your first born, to the spirits of good people made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant and to the sprinkled blood that promises peace.

Almighty God, you have promised to hear our prayers:
Grant that what we have asked in faith, we may by your grace receive, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE PEACE

Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given,
and his name shall be called the Prince of Peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

OFFERTORY HYMN

A collection is taken as we sing this hymn together.
You may wish to use the ABM envelopes provided for your donation.
Your support is truly appreciated.

Once in royal David's city stood a lowly
cattle shed where a mother laid her baby
in a manger for his bed.: Mary was that
mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven who is
God and Lord of all, and his shelter was a
stable,
and his cradle was a stall;
with the poor, despised and lowly lived on
earth our Saviour holy.

And our eyes at last shall see him, through
his own redeeming love, for that child so
dear and gentle
is our Lord in heaven above;
and he leads his children on
to the place where he is gone.

THE PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS

To you belongs the greatness,
the power, the glory, the victory and the majesty.
**All that is in the heavens and the earth is yours,
and of your own we give you.**

Blessèd are you, Lord God of all creation:
through your goodness we have this bread to offer,
which earth has given and human hands have made.
It will become for us the bread of life.
Blessèd be God for ever.

Blessèd are you, Lord God of all creation:
through your goodness we have this wine to offer,
fruit of the vine and work of human hands.
It will become for us the cup of salvation.
Blessèd be God for ever.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

All glory and honour, thanks and praise be given to you at all times
and in all places, Lord, holy Father, true and living God, through
Jesus Christ our Lord.

For he is your eternal Word through whom you have created all
things from the beginning and formed us in your own image.
In your great love you gave him to be made man for us and to share
our common life.

In obedience to your will your Son our Saviour offered himself as a
perfect sacrifice, and died upon the cross for our redemption.
Through him you have freed us from the slavery of sin and
reconciled us to yourself, our God and Father.

He is our great high priest whom you raised from death and exalted
to your right hand on high where he ever lives to intercede for us.
Through him you have sent upon us your holy and life-giving Spirit
and made us a royal priesthood called to serve you for ever.

Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we proclaim your great and glorious name, for every praising you and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

All glory and thanksgiving to you, holy Father;
on the night before he died, your Son, Jesus Christ, took bread;
when he had given you thanks he broke it,
gave it to his disciples, and said:
Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you;
do this to remember me.

After supper he took the cup;
when he had given you thanks he gave it to them and said:
Drink this, all of you,
for this is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for
you
and for many for the forgiveness of sins;
do this, as often as you drink it, to remember me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Lord, by your cross and resurrection
you have set us free.**

You are the Saviour of the world.

Therefore loving God,
recalling your great goodness to us in Christ,
his suffering and death,
his resurrection and ascension,
and looking for his coming in glory,
we celebrate our redemption
with this bread of life and this cup of salvation.

Accept our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving which we offer through Jesus Christ our great high priest.

Send your Holy Spirit
that these gifts of bread and wine which we receive
may be to us the body and blood of Christ,
and that we, filled with the Spirit's grace and power,
may be renewed for the service of your kingdom.

United in Christ with all who stand before you
in earth and heaven,
we worship you, through Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom,
and in whom, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit all glory is
yours, eternal God, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.
We who are many, are one body:
for we all share in the one bread.

AGNUS DEI

Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.

Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.

Jesus, redeemer of the world, grant us your peace

GIVING OF COMMUNION

God's holy gifts for God's holy people.

Jesus Christ is holy,

Jesus Christ is Lord,

to the glory of God the Father.

God invites everyone to gather around his table. All are welcome to come forward and receive this Holy Sacrament, or a blessing.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God our Father, in this night you have made known to us again the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: confirm our faith and fix our eyes on him until the day dawns and Christ the Morning Star rises in our hearts. To him be glory both now and for ever.

We thank you, Lord, that you have fed us in this sacrament, united us with Christ, and given us a foretaste of the heavenly banquet prepared for all peoples. Amen.

THANKSGIVING 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:

Refrain O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

True God of true God, Light of Light eternal,
lo, he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
Son of the Father, begotten, not created:

Refrain

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,
Jesu, to thee be glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:

Refrain

*Words: JF Wade (1711-1786)
arranged by Sir David Willcocks CBE MC (1919-2015)*

BLESSING

Christ, who by his Incarnation gathered into one things
earthly and heavenly, fill you with peace and goodwill and
make you partakers of the Divine Nature; and the blessing
of God Almighty: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

Amen

THE DISMISSAL

We go into the world to walk in God's light,
to rejoice in God's love and to reflect God's glory.

Amen! We go in the name of Christ!