



Christmas Eve Liturgy

Welcome

Leader: We have come to the end of the Advent season of waiting.

People: We have waited, as Mary and Joseph awaited the birth of their son.

Leader: We have waited, in the uncertainty of our pandemic world.

People: We have waited for better times.

Leader: We have waited surrounded by the darkness of night.

People: We have waited, anticipating the coming of the light.

Leader: Tonight, in this child, the waiting is over - we see the light of God shining.

People: This child will show us how to be the light of God shining.

Leader: O God our Father, you have brought us again to this glad season, when we celebrate the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant that his Spirit may be born anew in our hearts this night and that we may joyfully welcome him to live with us. Open our ears that we may hear the angel songs of old. Open our lips that we too may sing with uplifted hearts. Glory to you, God, in the highest and on earth, peace, goodwill towards all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Leader: Let us rejoice and sing!

Opening Carol: Hark the Herald Angels Sing

Lighting of the Christ Candle – A Candle is Burning (Christmas Eve Verse)

We honour Messiah with the Christ Candle's flame;

Our Christmas Eve candles glad tidings proclaim,

O Come all ye faithful, rejoice on this night

As God comes among us, the whole world's true light.

The Proclaiming of God's Word:

Isaiah 9: 2-7

Psalm 96 –

Sing to the Lord a new song;* **sing to the Lord, all the whole earth.**

Sing to the Lord and bless his name;* **proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.**

Declare his glory among the nations* **and his wonders among all peoples.**

For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised;* **he is more to be feared than all gods.**

As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols;* **but it is the Lord who made the heavens.**

Oh, the majesty and magnificence of his presence!* **Oh, the power and splendour of his sanctuary!**

Ascribe to the Lord, you families of the peoples;* **ascribe to the Lord honour and power.**

Ascribe to the Lord the honour due his name;* **bring offerings and come into his courts.**
Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;* **let the whole earth tremble before him.**
Tell it out among the nations: "The Lord is king!* **he has made the world so firm that it cannot be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity."**
Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad;* **let the sea thunder and all that is in it;* let the field be joyful and all that is therein.**
Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy before the Lord when he comes,* **when he comes to judge the earth.**
He will judge the world with righteousness* **and the peoples with his truth.**

We worship you God of glory, in the beauty of holiness, and we joyfully proclaim your just and righteous rule, established for all, through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Titus 2: 11-14

Anthem: The First Noel/Pachelbel's Canon

Luke 2: 1-20

Music: Child of the Poor

Homily

Affirmation of Faith – adapted from the poem "First Coming" by Madeleine L'Engle

God did not wait till the world was ready,
till nations were at peace.
God came when the Heavens were unsteady
and prisoners cried out for release.

God did not wait for the perfect time.
God came when the need was deep and great.
God dined with sinners in all their grime,
turned water into wine.

God did not wait till hearts were pure.
In joy God came to a tarnished world of sin and doubt.
To a world like ours, of anguished shame,
God came and God's Light would not go out.

God came to a world which did not mesh;
to heal its tangles, shield its scorn.

In the mystery of the Word made Flesh,
the Maker of the stars was born.

We cannot wait till the world is sane
to raise our songs with joyful voice,
For to share our grief, to touch our pain,
God came with Love: Rejoice! Rejoice!

Prayers of the People

Music – Mary Did You Know?

Collect for Christmas: Eternal God, this holy night is radiant with the brilliance of your one true light. As we have known that light on earth, bring us to see the splendour of your heavenly glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen**

The Lord's Prayer: 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. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever.

Amen

Silent Night – lighting of candles at home

Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright,
Round yon virgin mother and child,
Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Blessing: (Howard Thurman)

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and the 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 peoples,
To make music in the heart.

May God make this blessing live in your hearts tonight and always! Merry Christmas!

Final Carol: Joy to the World