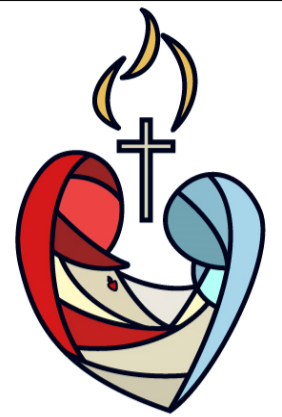


PYMBLE CATHOLIC PARISH

SACRED HEART & OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL SUCCOUR



Building a Christ-centred community of Love and Mercy



Christmas Prayer

Let the just rejoice,
for their Justifier is born.
Let the sick and infirm rejoice,
For their Saviour is born.
Let the captives rejoice,
For their Redeemer is born.
Let slaves rejoice,
for their Master is born.
Let free men rejoice,
For their Liberator is born.
Let All Christians rejoice,
For Jesus Christ is born.

St. Augustine of Hippo

Pymble Parish Office Christmas Break

The Parish Office will be closed from
Monday, 18 December 2023 to
Friday, 12 January 2024.
The Office will reopen on
Monday, 15 January 2024 at 8:30am.



Contact details:

(02) 9144 2702
office@pymblecatholicparish.org.au
www.pymblecatholicparish.org.au

Dear Parishioners, School Communities, Friends and Visitors,

Every year on Christmas Day we express our wishes to each other and exchange gifts. What are your expectations for Christmas this year? What would you like to receive from God or from your family as a gift? Of course, we have different needs but, I think, the biggest desire we all should have is to have the presence of Jesus in our lives. We need the Saviour to be a part of our existence on earth. Not only that; we need him to be the Lord of our lives and of our homes.

May He truly be alive through our words and actions during this beautiful season. Let us be peacemakers and bring reconciliation to our families and friends. Please, come and join our community to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ! May the Lord bless you and keep you in God's loving presence.

We wish you all a merry and blessed Christmas! You are in our prayers.

Fr. Ireneusz, Fr. Paul, Fr Piotr and Parish Staff



Liturgy of the Word

The Nativity of the Lord (24 Dec: 5pm and 9 pm)

Year B

Entrance Antiphon

*Today you will know that the Lord will come,
and he will save us*

First Reading

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

The Lord takes delight in you.

Is 62:1-5

About Zion I will not be silent,
about Jerusalem I will not grow weary,
until her integrity shines out like the dawn
and her salvation flames like a torch.
The nations then will see your integrity,
all the kings your glory,
and you will be called by a new name,
one which the mouth of the Lord will confer.
You are to be a crown of splendour in the hand
of the Lord,
a princely diadem in the hand of your God;
no longer are you to be named 'Forsaken',
nor your land 'Abandoned',
but you shall be called 'My Delight'
and your land 'The Wedded';
for the Lord takes delight in you
and your land will have its wedding.
Like a young man marrying a virgin,
so will the one who built you wed you,
and as the bridegroom rejoices in his bride,
so will your God rejoice in you.

Responsorial Psalm

(R.) For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

1. 'I have made a covenant with my chosen one;
I have sworn to David my servant:
I will establish your dynasty for ever
and set up your throne through all ages.' (R.)
2. Happy the people who acclaim such a king,
who walk, O Lord, in the light of your face,
who find their joy every day in your name,
who make your justice the source of their
bliss. (R.)
3. 'He will say to me: "You are my father,
my God, the rock who saves me."
I will keep my love for him always;
for him my covenant shall endure.' (R.)

Second Reading

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Paul spoke of Christ, the son of David.

Acts 13:16-17. 22-25

When Paul reached Antioch in Pisidia, he stood
up in the synagogue, held up a hand for silence
and began to speak:
'Men of Israel, and fearers of God, listen! The
God of our nation Israel chose our ancestors,
and made our people great when they were liv-
ing as foreigners in Egypt; then by divine power
he led them out.

'Then he made David their king, of whom he
approved in these words, "I have selected Da-
vid son of Jesse, a man after my own heart,
who will carry out my whole purpose". To
keep his promise, God has raised up
for Israel one of David's descendants, Jesus, as
Saviour, whose coming was heralded by John
when he proclaimed a baptism of repentance
for the whole people of Israel. Before John
ended his career he said, "I am not the one
you imagine me to be; that one is coming after
me and I am not fit to undo his sandal".'

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

*Tomorrow the wickedness of the earth will be
destroyed:*

the Saviour of the world will be our king.

Alleluia!

Gospel

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

*Mary will give birth to a son and you will name
him Jesus.*

Mt 1: 18-25

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His
mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but
before they came to live together she was
found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.
Her husband Joseph, being a man of honour
and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to
divorce her informally. He had made up his
mind to do this when the angel of the Lord ap-
peared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son
of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home
as your wife, because she has conceived what
is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to
a son and you must name him Jesus, because
he is the one who is to save his people from
their sins.' Now all this took place to fulfil the
words spoken by the Lord through the
prophet:

The Virgin will conceive and give birth to
a son and they will call him Emmanuel,
a name which means 'God-is-with-us'.

When Joseph woke up he did what the angel
of the Lord told him to do: he took his wife to
his home and, though he had not had inter-
course with her, she gave birth to a son; and
he named him Jesus.

Background on the Gospel Reading

The Gospel of Matthew tells the story of the
birth of Jesus from Joseph's perspective.
During his betrothal to Mary, Joseph learned
that Mary was pregnant. Betrothal in first-
century Jewish culture was more than an
engagement period; it was part of the marriage
contract. A breach of this contract was
considered adultery. If adultery was proved,
the punishment might be death. Joseph had
rights under Mosaic Law, but he chose to act
discreetly in his plans to break the marriage
contract so as to protect Mary. The way that
Joseph and Mary faced these extraordinary
circumstances tells us much about these holy
people and their faith in God.

Joseph did as the angel of the Lord directed. He
took Mary to be his wife and accepted the child
in her womb as his own. When Jesus was born,
Joseph followed the directions of the angel and
gave the child the name Jesus. We often recall
Mary's cooperation in God's plan for our salva-
tion. Today's Gospel reminds us of Joseph's im-
portant role, which was also crucial to God's
plan for Jesus' birth.

Reflection

Knowing your family history is important in
establishing your identity. The longer form of
today's Gospel lists many of the ancestors of
Jesus and serves to establish Jesus' place in the
history of Israel. Many important figures from
the Hebrew Scriptures are named in this
genealogy: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah,
Jesse, David, and Solomon, among many
others. From among these names, however,
two are highlighted: Abraham, the father of the
Israelites because of God's promise to raise
from his descendants a great nation, and David,
the king who united the tribes of Israel and
from whose descendants the Messiah would
arise.

After you gather as a family, talk about the
importance of your family's history. Recall
where your ancestors came from. Tell some
important stories from your family's history.

In today's Gospel, we hear about Jesus'
ancestors. Read today's Gospel, Matthew
1:1-25. Which names do you recognize from
Hebrew Scripture? What do you know about
these people? From this family history, we learn
that Jesus is the fulfilment of God's promise to
raise up a saviour from the people of Israel.

Conclude in prayer together thanking God for
the gift of our Saviour, Jesus, who saves us
from our sins. Sing together one or more
favourite Christmas hymns and pray together
the Glory Be to the Father.



Liturgy of the Word

The Nativity of the Lord (Midnight Mass)

Year B

Entrance Antiphon

*The Lord said to me: You are my Son.
It is I who have begotten you this day.*

First Reading

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

A son is given to us.

Is 9:1-7

The people that walked in darkness
has seen a great light;
on those who live in a land of deep shadow
a light has shone.
You have made their gladness greater,
you have made their joy increase;
they rejoice in your presence
as men rejoice at harvest time,
as men are happy when they are dividing the
spoils.
For the yoke that was weighing on him,
the bar across his shoulders,
the rod of his oppressor,
these you break as on the day of Midian.
For all the footgear of battle,
every cloak rolled in blood,
is burnt
and consumed by fire.
For there is a child born for us,
a son given to us
and dominion is laid on his shoulders;
and this is the name they give him:
Wonder-Counsellor, Mighty-God,
Eternal-Father, Prince-of-Peace.
Wide is his dominion
in a peace that has no end,
for the throne of David
and for his royal power,
which he establishes and makes secure
in justice and integrity.
From this time onwards and for ever,
the jealous love of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Responsorial Psalm

(R.) Today is born our Saviour, Christ the Lord.

1. O sing a new song to the Lord,
sing to the Lord all the earth.
O sing to the Lord, bless his name. (R.)
2. Proclaim his help day by day,
tell among the nations his glory
and his wonders among all the peoples. (R.)
3. Let the heavens rejoice and earth be glad,
let the sea and all within it thunder praise,
let the land and all it bears rejoice,
all the trees of the wood shout for joy
at the presence of the Lord for he comes,
he comes to rule the earth. (R.)
4. With justice he will rule the world,
he will judge the peoples with his truth. (R.)

Second Reading

Ti 2:11-14

A reading from the letter of St Paul to Titus

God's grace has been revealed to all people.

God's grace has been revealed, and it has
made salvation possible for the whole hu-
man race and taught us that what we have
to do is to give up everything that does not
lead to God, and all our worldly ambitions;
we must be self-restrained and live good
and religious lives here in this present
world, while we are waiting in hope for the
blessing which will come with the Appearing
of the glory of our great God and saviour
Christ Jesus. He sacrificed himself for
us in order to set us free from all wicked-
ness and to purify a people so that it could
be his very own and would have no ambi-
tion except to do good.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

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

Alleluia!

Gospel

Lk 2:11-14

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

Today a saviour has been born for you.

Caesar Augustus issued a decree for a census
of the whole world to be taken. This census –
the first – took place while Quirinius was gov-
ernor of Syria, and everyone went to his own
town to be registered. So Joseph set out from
the town of Nazareth in Galilee and travelled
up to Judaea, to the town of David
called Bethlehem, since he was of David's
House and line, in order to be registered to-
gether with Mary, his betrothed, who was
with child. While they were there the time
came for her to have her child, and she gave
birth to a son, her first-born. She wrapped him
in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger
because there was no room for them at the
inn. In the countryside close by there were
shepherds who lived in the fields and took it in
turns to watch their flocks during the night.
The angel of the Lord appeared to them and
the glory of the Lord shone round them. They
were terrified, but the angel said, 'Do not be
afraid. Listen, I bring you news of great joy, a
joy to be shared by the whole people. Today in
the town of David a saviour has been born to
you; he is Christ the Lord. And here is a sign for
you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling
clothes and lying in a manger.' And suddenly
with the angel there was a great throng of the
heavenly host, praising God and singing:
'Glory to God in the highest heaven
and peace to men who enjoy his favour.'

Background on the Gospel Reading

During the Christmas season, our liturgy invites
us to consider the birth of the Lord from many
vantage points. As we begin this season, it is
useful to remember that the stories of Jesus'
birth and childhood are found in only two of
our Gospels, Matthew and Luke. Throughout
this season, we will hear stories from both Gos-
pels. Those Gospels tell different but comple-
mentary stories about Jesus' birth, highlighting
items of theological importance about the In-
carnation and the salvation that Jesus brings.

On this day, the Feast of Christmas, we are giv-
ing the details of Christ's birth as found in the
Gospel of Luke. Here we learn about the census
that brings Mary and Joseph from Nazareth to
Bethlehem, where Jesus is born. We also hear
about the angel's announcement of this good
news to the shepherds. In these details, we find
two of Luke's particular concerns: (1) to locate
the coming of Christ in the wider framework of
salvation history as good news for all people,
Gentiles and Jews, and (2) to show the Lord's
favour upon the poor and lowly.

In Luke's Gospel, Jesus is born as one of the
poor. Laid in a manger in a stable, because
there was no room at the inn, he comes into
the world through obscure and surprising
means. Yet, as the angel proclaims this good
news to the shepherds, this infant is an-
nounced as the Messiah and Lord. In the song
of the angels, all are invited to give glory to
God for this miraculous birth, in which God
comes to share our humanity.

The angels sing that Jesus' coming brings
peace. Yet there is little in the details of this
Gospel that gives evidence of peace. Jesus is
born as a traveller away from home, born in a
stable in a crowded city under the occupation
of foreigners. The appearance of the angel to
the shepherds frightens them. When the angels
proclaim Jesus' birth as the harbinger of
"peace on earth," the evangelist Luke clearly
wants us to take the long view. The shepherds
are invited to claim a faith that will enable them
to see this infant as a sign God's promise of a
messiah. It is through such faith that one finds
the peace of which the angels sing.

**Pray together for people in today's world who
may experience circumstances like those found
in the story of Jesus' birth. Pray for those who
are far from home, those who live in fear, those
who live in need.**

**Sing together one or more Christmas hymns,
such as "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" or
"Angels We Have Heard on High."**



Entrance Antiphon

A child is born for us, and a son is given to us; his sceptre of power rests upon his shoulder, and his name will be called Messenger of great counsel.

First Reading

Is 52:7-10

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

All the ends of the earth shall see the saving power of our God.

How beautiful on the mountains, are the feet of one who brings good news, who heralds peace, brings happiness, proclaims salvation, and tells Zion, 'Your God is king!'

Listen! Your watchmen raise their voices, they shout for joy together, for they see the Lord face to face, as he returns to Zion.

Break into shouts of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the Lord is consoling his people, redeeming Jerusalem.

The Lord bares his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God

Responsorial Psalm

(R.) All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God.

1. Sing a new song to the Lord for he has worked wonders. His right hand and his holy arm have brought salvation. (R.)

2. The Lord has made known his salvation; has shown his justice to the nations. He has remembered his truth and love for the house of Israel. (R.)

3. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Shout to the Lord all the earth, ring out your joy. (R.)

4. Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp, with the sound of music. With trumpets and the sound of the horn acclaim the King, the Lord. (R.)

Second Reading

Heb 1:1-6

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

In our own time, God speaks to us through his Son.

At various times in the past and in various different ways, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets; but in our own time, the last days, he has spoken to us through his Son, the Son that he has appointed to inherit everything and through whom he made everything there is.

He is the radiant light of God's glory and the perfect copy of his nature, sustaining the universe by his powerful command; and now that he has destroyed the defilement of sin, he has gone to take his place in heaven at the right hand of divine Majesty. So he is now as far above the angels as the title which he has inherited is higher than their own name.

God has never said to any angel: You are my Son, today I have become your father, or: I will be a father to him and he a son to me. Again, when he brings the First-born into the world, he says: Let all the angels of God worship him.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

A holy day has dawned upon us.

Come you nations and adore the Lord.

Today a great light has come upon the earth.

Alleluia!

Gospel

Jn 1:1-5. 9-14

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

The Word of God became flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw his glory.

In the beginning was the Word: the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things came to be, not one thing had its being but through him. All that came to be had life in him and that life was the light of men, a light that shines in the dark, a light that darkness could not overpower. The Word was the true light that enlightens all men; and he was coming into the world. He was in the world that had its being through him, and the world did not know him. He came to his own domain and his own people did not accept him. But to all who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to all who believe in the name of him who was born not out of human stock or urge of the flesh or will of man but of God himself. The Word was made flesh, he lived among us. And we saw his glory, the glory that is his as the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Background on the Gospel Reading

As we observe in today's reading, the Gospel of John includes highly philosophical and theological language. One example that particularly stands out is John's use of the expression, "Word of God." This expression (logos in the Greek) borrows from a concept found in both Jewish and Greek thought. In Jewish thought, this phrase describes God taking action—for example, in the Creation story and in the Wisdom literature. In Greek, or Hellenistic, thought, the logos was understood as an intermediary between God and humanity. John and others in the early Church adopted this language to describe God's incarnation in Jesus. As the term was used to express the trinitarian faith of Christians, the word Logos came to be equated with the Second Person of the Trinity.

In this prologue to the Gospel of John, the main themes that will be developed in his Gospel are introduced. These themes are presented as dualities: light/darkness, truth/falsehood, life/death, and belief/unbelief. We also hear in this prologue a unique aspect of John's Gospel—the motif of testimony. John the Baptist was sent by God to testify about Jesus, the light. Others in this Gospel will also offer testimony about Jesus. The reader is invited to accept this testimony, which bears witnesses to Jesus, the Son of God. But even more directly, Jesus' action and words will themselves testify to his identity with God as God's Incarnate Word.

Thinking about Jesus' birth in these theological and cosmological terms seems particularly appropriate as we celebrate the feast of Christmas in the darkness of winter. At this time, nature itself seems to remind us of the darkness of sin. Into this darkness, in the midst of our sinfulness, God comes to dwell among us. John's Gospel reminds us that through the Incarnation, God saves us from the darkness of sin and makes us his children.

John's Gospel reminds us that the image we see in our Nativity set is a most remarkable sight: God made himself at home with us by taking on flesh and becoming a human person. We call this mystery the Incarnation. What are some of the things that John's Gospel says happened for us because Jesus came to dwell among us? (Light overcame darkness; we see God's glory in Jesus; we became children of God.) Together thank God for this mystery of the Incarnation and the salvation that we received because Jesus was born among us.

Sing together a Christmas hymn, such as "O Come, All Ye Faithful" or "Silent Night."