

EUCHARIST OF CHRISTMAS NIGHT



The Chapel of the Transfiguration
S. Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia

24th December 2024

THE GATHERING

The service will continue without any instruction. The responses of the congregation are given in bold print. Please follow the rubrics.

The congregation shall stand when the Cross appears at the West Door. The Officiant shall kindle incense and prepare for the procession saying,

Let us Proceed in peace;
In the name of Christ. Amen.

Then shall follow the processional hymn. During the procession, the Officiant will carry the figure of Baby Jesus to be laid in the crib.

THE PROCESSIONAL HYMN

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Words: Bishop Phillips Brooks (1835-1903)

Melody: Lewis Redner (1831-1908)

**1. O LITTLE town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.**

**2. O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth;
For Christ is born of Mary;
And, gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wond'ring love.**

**3. How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still
The dear Christ enters in.**

**4. Where children pure and happy
Pray to the blessed Child,
Where misery cries out to thee,
Son of the mother mild;
Where charity stands watching
And faith holds wide the door,
The dark night wakes, the glory breaks,
And Christmas comes once more.**

**5. O holy Child of Bethlehem
Descend to us, we pray
Cast out our sin and enter in
Be born to us today
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell
O come to us, abide with us
Our Lord Emmanuel**

THE GREETING

The officiant greets the people at the crib

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

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.

The Lord be with you;

And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

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. **Amen.**

We bless this crib in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Blessed are you, Sovereign God, creator of all; To you be glory and praise for ever! As we rejoice in the gift of your presence among us, let the light of your love always shine in our hearts and your praises ever be on our lips. Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit:

Blessed be God's reign for ever. 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 to bring to mind and confess our sins of omission and commission

THE CONFESSION

Communion Service in E (Collegium Regale) - Harold Darke (1888 - 1976)

God our Father, you sent your Son full of grace and truth: forgive our failure to receive him. Lord, have mercy.

Kyrie Eleison, Kyrie Eleison, Kyrie Eleison (*Lord have mercy*)

Jesus our Saviour, you were born in poverty and laid in a manger: forgive our greed and rejection of your ways. Christ, have mercy.

Christe Eleison, Christe Eleison, Christe Eleison (*Christ have mercy*)

Spirit of love, your servant Mary responded joyfully to your call: forgive the hardness of our hearts. Lord, have mercy.

Kyrie Eleison, Kyrie Eleison, Kyrie Eleison (*Lord have mercy*)

THE ABSOLUTION

May the God of all healing and forgiveness draw you to himself, that you may behold the glory of his Son, the Word made flesh, and be cleansed from all your sins, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Then the Choir will burst into praise, as a form of preparation for worship and to receive the Word of God, while the Officiant enter the sanctuary kindles incense and censes the Altar.

GLORY TO GOD

Words: Luke 11: 24

Music : No. 17 Chorus from The Messiah - George Frideric Handel (1685 - 1759)

GLORY to God in the highest, and peace on earth, goodwill towards men.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRISTMAS CANDLE

The Advent Wreath has three purple or blue candles, reflecting the liturgical colour for Advent, with a pink candle for the Third Sunday, when rose-pink vestments are traditionally worn, in a ring around a white or gold candle. The first candle is lit on Advent Sunday; additional ones are lit, one on each Sunday, and the white or gold one on Christmas Day. Each of the four Sundays reminds us of those who prepared for the coming of Christ. 'The Patriarchs' focuses on Abraham, our father in faith, and David, the ancestor in whose city Jesus was born. 'The Prophets' gives an opportunity to reflect on the way the birth of the Messiah was 'foretold'. John, who proclaimed the Saviour, and Mary, who bore him in her womb, complete the picture.

The following prayer is said after the lighting of the Christmas Candle.

God our Father, today the Saviour is born and those who live in darkness are seeing a great light. Help us, who greet the birth of Christ with joy, to live in the light of your Son and to share the good news of your love. We ask this through Jesus Christ, the light who has come into the world. **Amen.**

Lord Jesus, Light of light, you have come among us. Help us who live by your light to shine as lights in your world. Glory to God in the highest. Amen.

THE COLLECT

The Lord be with you
And with thy spirit
Let us pray

All kneel

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.**

All sit

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

THE OLD TESTAMENT

Isaiah 9: 2 – 7

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.

Silence

This is the Word of the Lord,
Thanks be to God.

Then shall be sung by the choir alone. The congregation remain seated.

PSALM

Psalm 96

Anglican Chant by C. Hubert Parry (1848 - 1918)

1. O SING unto the Lord a new song : sing unto the Lord, all the whole earth.
 2. Sing unto the Lord, and praise his Name : be telling of his salvation from day to day.
 3. Declare his honour unto the heathen : and his wonders unto all people.
 4. For the Lord is great, and cannot worthily be praised : he is more to be feared than all gods.
 5. As for all the gods of the heathen, they are but idols : but it is the Lord that made the heavens.
 6. Glory and worship are before him : power and honour are in his sanctuary.
 7. Ascribe unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people : ascribe unto the Lord worship and power.
 8. Ascribe unto the Lord the honour due unto his Name : bring presents, and come into his courts.
 9. O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness : let the whole earth stand in awe of him.
 10. Tell it out among the heathen that the Lord is King : and that it is he who hath made the round world so fast that it cannot be moved; and how that he shall judge the people righteously.
 11. Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad : let the sea make a noise, and all that therein is.
 12. Let the field be joyful, and all that is in it : then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord.
 13. For he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth : and with righteousness to judge the world, and the people with his truth.
- Glory be to the Father, and to the Son : and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be : world without end. Amen

All sit

THE EPISTLE

Titus 2: 11 - 14

For 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.

Silence

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

All Stand. The Lesser Entrance will take place during the singing of the Gradual Hymn, where the Book of the Gospels is brought up in procession.

GRADUAL HYMN

Hark the Herald Angels Sing

Words: Charles Wesley 1739

Music: Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

**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 the angelic host proclaim:
"Christ is born in Bethlehem"**

**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 man to dwell
Jesus, our Emmanuel**

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

GOspel ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, **Alleluia**. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. **Alleluia**.

THE GOSPEL

St. Luke 2: 1 - 20

Listen to the Good News proclaimed in the Gospel according to St. Luke second Chapter beginning at the first verse.

Glory be to thee, O Lord.

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.

This is the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Praise be to thee, O Christ.

**Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Son of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings
Ris'n with healing in His wings
Mild He lays His glory by
Born that man no more may die
Born to raise the sons of earth
Born to give them second birth**

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

All sit

SERMON

The Warden - Rev'd Marc Billimoria

Silence is observed for reflection

Then shall be sung by the choir alone, the congregation sitting

ANTHEM

I saw three ships

Arranged - Mack Willberg (b. 1955)

I SAW three ships come sailing
On Christmas day in the morning.

And what was in those ships all three?

Our Saviour Christ and his lady.

Pray whither sailed those ships all three?

O they sailed into Bethlehem.

And all the Bells on earth shall ring

And all the Angels in Heaven shall sing

All the souls on earth shall sing

Then let us all rejoice Amain!

All standing

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Let us affirm together the common faith of the Church'.

Do you believe and trust in God the Father, source of all being and life, the one for whom we exist?

We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son, who took our human nature, died for us and rose again?

We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God and makes Christ known in the world?

We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

All sit or kneel for the Prayers of the People

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Holy God

Hear our prayer.

All standing

THE PEACE

This holy night the angels sang, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to all in whom he delights.'

St. Luke 2.14

The peace of the Lord be always with you

And also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All may exchange a sign of peace.

The Greater Entrance will take place during the singing of the Offertory Hymn, where the elements of Wine, Bread and Water for the Eucharist are brought up in procession.

THE LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT

OFFERTORY HYMN

It came upon the Midnight Clear

Words : E.H. Sears (1810 - 76)

Melody : English traditional melody adapted by Arthur Sullivan (1842 - 1900)

Last verse arranged : Sir David Willcocks (1919 - 2015)

IT CAME upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, goodwill to men,
From heaven's all-gracious King!"
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come,
With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats
O'er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains
They bend on hovering wing;
And ever o'er its Babel sounds
The blessed angels sing.

Choir only

Yet with the woes of sin and strife
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong;
And man, at war with man, hears not
The love-song which they bring;
O hush the noise, ye men of strife,
And hear the angels sing.

For lo!, the days are hastening on,
By prophet bards foretold,
When with the ever-circling years
Comes round the age of gold;
When peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendours fling,
And the whole world give back the song
Which now the angels sing.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Word made flesh, life of the world, in your incarnation you embraced our poverty: by your Spirit may we share in your riches. Amen.

The people remain standing. The Celebrant, faces them and chants

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER (THE GREAT THANKSGIVING)

The Lord be with you.
And with thy spirit.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up unto the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is meet and right so to do.

Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds

It is very meet, right, and our bounded duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O lord, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God.

And now we give thee thanks because, in the incarnation of the Word, a new light has dawned upon the world; Thou hast become one with us that we might become one with thee in thy glorious kingdom.

Therefore with Angels, and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising thee, and saying,

Sung by the choir alone

SANCTUS

Communion Service in E (Collegium Regale) - Harold Darke (1888 - 1976)

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of hosts, heav'n and earth are full of Thy glory. Glory be to Thee, O Lord most high. Amen

Then the Celebrant continues, the people kneeling.

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Saviour and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "*Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.*"

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "*Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.*"

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

We remember his death,

We proclaim his resurrection,

We await his coming in glory;

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with St. Joseph, the Virgin Mary and all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honour and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The celebrant breaks the consecrated bread.

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

We break the bread of life, and that life is the light of the world.

God here among us, light in the midst of us, bring us to light and life.

Rejoicing in the presence of God here among us, as our Saviour taught us, so we pray

To be sung by the choir alone

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Music : Albert Malotte (1895 - 1964)

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

The gifts of God for the people of God

Sung by the choir alone

BENEDICTUS

Communion Service in E (Collegium Regale) - Harold Darke (1888 - 1976)

Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

All kneel or prostrate

DEEP SILENCE for contemplation

After the deep silence, the shall sing

AGNUS DEI

Communion Service in E (Collegium Regale) - Harold Darke (1888 - 1976)

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world: Have mercy on us.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world: Have mercy on us.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world: Grant us thy peace.

THE INVITATION

Christ is the true bread which has come down from heaven.

Lord, give us this bread always.

Followed by the Choir, all those who receive communion are welcome to receive the Body and Blood of Christ. Guided by the prefects, the congregation may come up pew by pew and receive communion standing, from the middle of the aisle.

THE DISTRIBUTION

The Body and Blood of Christ. **Amen**

O Holy Night

Words: John S. Dwight (1813 - 1893)

Music: Adolph Adam (1803 - 1856)

Arranged: Philip Le Bas (b. 1958)

O HOLY night, the stars are brightly shining,
It is the night of the dear Saviour's birth;
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
'Till he appeared and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn;
Fall on your knees, Oh hear the angel voices!
O night divine! O night when Christ was born.

Led by the light of faith serenely beaming,
With glowing hearts by his cradle we stand.
So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming,
Here come the wisemen from orient land.
The king of kings lay thus in lowly manger,
In all our trials born to be our friend;
He knows our need, he guardeth us from danger,
Behold your King! Before him lowly bend.

Truly He taught us to love one another;
His law is Love and His gospel is Peace;
Chains shall he break, for the slave is our brother,
And in his name all oppression shall cease,
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful Chorus raise we;
Let all within us praise his Holy name!
Christ is the Lord! O praise his name for ever,
His pow'r and glory, evermore proclaim!

I cannot tell why He, whom angels worship,

Words : William Young Fullerton (1857-1932)

Melody : LONDONDERRY AIR

I CANNOT tell why He, whom angels worship,
Should set His love upon the sons of men,
Or why, as Shepherd, He should seek the wand'ers,
To bring them back, they know not how or when.
But this I know, that He was born of Mary,
When Bethl'hem's manger was His only home,
And that He lived at Nazareth and laboured,
And so the Saviour, Savior of the world, is come.

I cannot tell how silently He suffered,
As with His peace He graced this place of tears,
Or how His heart upon the Cross was broken,
The crown of pain to three and thirty years.
But this I know, He heals the broken-hearted,
And stays our sin, and calms our lurking fear,
And lifts the burden from the heavy laden,
For yet the Saviour, Savior of the world, is here.

I cannot tell how He will win the nations,
How He will claim His earthly heritage,
How satisfy the needs and aspirations
Of east and west, of sinner and of sage.
But this I know, all flesh shall see His glory,
And He shall reap the harvest He has sown,
And some glad day His sun shall shine in splendour
When He the Saviour, Savior of the world, is known.

I cannot tell how all the lands shall worship,
When, at His bidding, every storm is stilled,
Or who can say how great the jubilation
When all the hearts of men with love are filled.
But this I know, the skies will thrill with rapture,
And myriad, myriad human voices sing,
And earth to heaven, and heaven to earth, will answer:
At last the Saviour, Savior of the world, is King.

POST COMMUNION PRAYERS

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. **Amen.**

Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ. Through him we offer you our souls and bodies to be a living sacrifice. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.

RECESSIONAL HYMN

O Come All Ye Faithful (Adeste Fideles)

Words & Music: Traditional

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!

God of God,
Light of light,
Lo! he abhors not a virgin's womb;
Very God,
Begotten, not created:

Child for us sinners
Poor and in a manger,
Fain we embrace thee, with awe and love;
Who would not love thee,
Loving us so dearly?

Sing, choirs of Angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
Glory to God
In the highest:

THE DISMISSAL GOSPEL

St. John 1: 1-14

Hear the good news of the Word made flesh according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

THE BLESSING

May the Babe of Bethlehem bring you peace; May the Child of Nazareth bring you joy; May the Man of Galilee bring you strength; May the Christ of Calvary bring you courage; May the risen Jesus bring you hope and the Ascended Christ a foretaste of His Glory. **Amen.**

**Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
Born this happy morning,
Jesu, to thee be Glory given;
Word of the Father,
Now in flesh appearing:**

*O Come, let us adore him,
O Come, let us adore him,
O Come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!*

The Warden and Staff of S. Thomas' wish you and your families a Blessed Christmas and a peaceful New Year!