



Saint Matthew's Church
Big Lamp ~ Summerhill Street
Newcastle

Text of the Mass of the Nativity – 24th December 2025

As the priest enters the church, the following is sung:

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 the Virgin's womb;
Very God,
Begotten not created:
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 Heaven above;
Glory to God
In the highest:
O come, etc.

The Birth of Jesus is set within human history as the Christmas candle on the Advent wreath is lit:

Innumerable ages having passed since the creation of the world, when, in the beginning, God created Heaven and earth and formed man in His own image; many more centuries after the Flood, when the Most High placed His rainbow in the Heavens as a sign of the Covenant and of peace; from the migration of Abraham, our father in faith, from Ur of the Chaldeans, twenty-one centuries; from the Exodus of the people of Israel out of Egypt, led by Moses, thirteen centuries; from the anointing of David as king, about one thousand years; in the sixty-fifth week according to Daniel's prophecy; in the year of the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad; from the founding of the City of Rome, seven hundred and fifty-two years; in the rule of Caesar Octavian Augustus, the forty-second year; and the whole world being at peace; Jesus Christ eternal God, the eternal Father's Son, being pleased by His Coming to consecrate the world, by the Holy Spirit conceived, nine months having passed since His Conception, in Bethlehem of Judah was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man. The Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh.

Blessed is He Who comes in the Name of the Lord:
God is the Lord, Who has showed us the Light.

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
Born this happy morning,
Jesus, to Thee be glory given;
Word of the Father,
Now in flesh appearing.
O come, etc.

Words: C18 Latin
Tr Frederick Oakley 1802 - 80 and others
Music: Adeste Fideles
Melody probably JF Wade 1711 - 86

+ The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

And with thy spirit.

The Angel said, "You shall call His Name Jesus, for He will save the people from their sins. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. We confess our sins in penitence and faith:

God our Father, You sent Your Son full of Grace and Truth; forgive our failure to receive Him: Kyrie eleison.

Kyrie eleison.

Jesu our Saviour, You were born in poverty and laid in a manger; forgive our greed and rejection of Your ways: Christe eleison.

Christe eleison.

Your servant Mary responded joyfully to Your call; forgive the hardness of our hearts: Kyrie eleison.

Kyrie eleison

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon *you*,
pardon and deliver *you* from all *your* sins,
confirm and strengthen *you* in all goodness,
and keep *you* in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Lord spake and said unto me: Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee. Why do the heathen so furiously rage together: and why do the people imagine a vain thing? Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

The Lord spake &c

*During the **Gloria in excelsis**, the Altar, the symbol of God's Presence, may be honoured with incense.*

Glory be to God on high.

And in earth peace, goodwill towards men.

We praise Thee, we bless Thee,

we worship Thee, we glorify Thee,

we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory,

O Lord God, heavenly King,

God the Father almighty.

O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ:

O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,

that takest away the sins of the world,

have mercy upon us.

Thou that takest away the sins of the world,

receive our prayer.

Thou that sittest at the right

hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.

For Thou only art holy, Thou only art the Lord;

Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost,

art most high,

+ in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Let us pray:

Good and gracious God, on this holy night You gave us Your Son, the Lord of the Universe, wrapped in swaddling clothes, the Saviour of all, lying in a manger. In this holy night, draw us into the Mystery of Your love. Join our voices with the heavenly host, that we may sing Your glory on high. Give us a place among the shepherds, that we may find the one for Whom we have waited, Jesus Christ, Your Word made flesh, Who lives and reigns in the unity of the Holy Spirit, the Splendour of eternal light, God, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined. Thou hast multiplied the nation, thou hast increased its joy; they rejoice before thee as with joy at the harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, thou hast broken as on the day of Mid'ian. For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called "Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David, and over his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and for evermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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

Sing to the Lord and bless his name; ♦ tell out his salvation from day to day.

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

Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad; ♦ let the sea thunder and all that is in it;

Let the fields be joyful and all that is in them; ♦ let all the trees of the wood shout for joy before the Lord.

For he comes, he comes to judge the earth; ♦ with righteousness he will judge the world and the peoples with his truth.

A Reading from the Letter to Titus.

The grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men, training us to renounce irreligion and worldly passions, and to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world, awaiting our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity and to purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel book is carried to the Lectern:

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! I bring you news of great joy: today a Saviour has been born to us. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Christ's Presence in the words of the Gospel may be honoured with incense.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

Glory be to Thee, O Lord.

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. This was the first enrolment, when Quirin'i-us was governor of Syria. and all went to be enrolled, each to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to be delivered. And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. And in that region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

(continued over the page)

And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths 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, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased!"

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

A homily may follow.

We believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
Maker of Heaven and earth,
and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds.
God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God,
begotten not made;
being of one substance with the Father,
by Whom all things were made;
Who for us men and for our salvation
came down from Heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost
of the Virgin Mary, and was made man.
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried,
and the third day He rose again
according to the Scriptures,
and ascended into Heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of the Father.

(continued over the page)

And He shall come again in glory
to judge both the quick and the dead;
Whose Kingdom shall have no end.
And we believe in the Holy Ghost,
the Lord, the Giver of life,
Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son,
Who with the Father and the Son together
is worshipped and glorified,
Who spake by the prophets.
And we believe
one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church,
We acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins.
And we look for the resurrection of the dead,
+ and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Gathered together in Christ, to celebrate His Birth, Who is Saviour of the world, let us pray to God our Father, Who has sent us such a precious gift, for the needs of the Church and the world:

Father, in this holy night, Christians in Bethlehem and the world over are celebrating Christ's Birth: open our hearts that He may be born in us today:

Lord, hear us ... [Lord, graciously hear us.](#)

In this holy night, there was no room for Your Son at the inn: protect with Your love all who have no home and live in poverty:

Lord, hear us ... [Lord, graciously hear us.](#)

In this holy night, Mary, in the pain of labour, brought Your Son to birth: hold in Your hand all who are in pain of distress today:

Lord, hear us ... [Lord, graciously hear us.](#)

In this holy night, Christ came as a light shining in the darkness: bring comfort to all who suffer in the sadness of our world:

Lord, hear us ... [Lord, graciously hear us.](#)

(continued over the page)

In this holy night, shepherds in the field heard good tidings of joy: give grace to all who preach the Gospel of Christ's love:
Lord, hear us ... [Lord, graciously hear us.](#)

In this holy night, the angels sang, "Peace to God's people on earth:" strengthen those who work for peace and justice in the world:
Lord, hear us ... [Lord, graciously hear us.](#)

In this holy night, strangers found the Holy Family and saw the Baby lying in the manger: bless our homes and all whom we love:
Lord, hear us ... [Lord, graciously hear us.](#)

In this holy night, Heaven is come down to earth and earth is raised to Heaven: keep in safety all those who have passed through death:
Lord, hear us ... [Lord, graciously hear us.](#)

In union with our Lady, Saint Matthew, Saint Philip, Saint Augustine and all the saints, as we celebrate the gift of Your Son, Jesus, we ask You to guide us that we may work for those things, which above all others, would make glad His heart, the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

[O Lord hear my prayer, O Lord hear my prayer, when I call, answer me.](#)
[O Lord hear my prayer, O Lord hear my prayer. Come and listen to me.](#)

To us a child is born; to us a Son is given; and His Name shall be called, "Wonderful, Counsellor, Prince of Peace."

The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

[And with thy spirit.](#)

As the bread and wine are brought to the Altar and prepared for the Mass, the following is sung:

Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad before the Face of the Lord for He comes.

Let us here who represent Cherubim guards around God's throne, As they cry out their thrice holy hymn, Praising the life-giving Trinity, Lay aside all earthly care. Borne by the power of angels' wings To His people now comes the King of kings. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

The preparation of the Altar continues; incense may be used to honour the place where Christ will become present.

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

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 wondering love.

(continued over the page)

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.

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.

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

Words: Phillips Brooks 1835 - 93

Music: Forest Green

English traditional melody

Harmony by R Vaughan Williams 1872 - 1958

At the end:

Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty. All that is in Heaven and earth is Thine:

All things come of Thee, O Lord, and of Thine own do we give Thee.

Source of light and goodness, accept our offering on this joyful feast that we may become more like Him, Who joins our lives to Yours and Who is Lord for ever and ever.

Amen.

The priest begins the great prayer of 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 unto our Lord God.

It is meet and right so to do.

Father all powerful and ever-living God,

We do well always and everywhere to give You thanks

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

In this night a new Light has dawned upon the world:

God has become one with us,

And we have become one again with God.

In the wonder of the Incarnation, Your eternal Word

Has brought to the eyes of faith

A new and radiant vision of Your glory.

Therefore with all the angels of Heaven,

We lift our voices to proclaim the glory of Your Name

And sing our joyful hymn of praise.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts.

Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.

Glory be to Thee, O Lord most high.

+ Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his Apostles
and, taking bread, he praised you.
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

The priest holds up the consecrated Host for the people to see.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.
Again he praised you, 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.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

The priest holds up the chalice of consecrated wine for the people to see.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice
made once for all upon the cross.
Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Dying You destroyed our death, rising You restored our life; Lord
Jesus, come in glory.

(continued over the page)

Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.
Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with [*N and*] all the saints
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord,
By Whom and with Whom and in Whom,
Amen,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
Amen,
all honour and glory are Yours, almighty Father, for ever and ever.
Amen.

Let us pray for the coming of the Kingdom in the words our Saviour
gave us:
Our Father,
Who art in Heaven,
hallowed by 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.

We break this bread to share in the Body of Christ.
Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us Thy peace.

The priest holds up the consecrated elements and invites people to receive Holy Communion:

+ Behold the Lamb of God; behold Him, Who takes away the sin of the world; happy are they who are called to His Supper.

Lord, I am not worthy to receive You; but only say the Word and my soul will be healed.

The Word of God became flesh; we have seen His Glory.

Holy Communion follows.

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, good will to men,
From Heaven's almighty King!"
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come,
With peaceful sings 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.

(continued over the page)

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 earth give back the song
Which now the angels sing.

Words: Edmund Sears 1810 - 76

Music: Noel

Traditional English Melody

Adapted by Arthur Sullivan 1842 - 1900

After Holy Communion:

With holy worship the dawn from on high has broken upon the world.

Let us pray:

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 Whom be glory both now and for ever and ever.

[Amen.](#)

As the figure of the Christ-child is carried from the Altar, the following is sung:

While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground,
The Angel of the Lord came down
And glory shone around.

"Fear not," said he; for mighty dread
Had seized their troubled mind;
"Glad tidings of great joy I bring
To you and all mankind.

"To you in David's town this day
Is born of David's line
A Saviour, Who is Christ the Lord;
And this shall be the sign.

The heav'nly Babe you there shall find
To human view displayed,
All meanly wrapped in swathing bands,
And in a manger laid."

Thus spake the Seraph; and forthwith
Appeared a shining throng
Of Angels praising God, who thus
Addressed their joyful song:

"All glory be to God on high,
And to the earth be peace;
Good will henceforth from Heaven to men
Begin and never cease."

Words: Nahm Tate 1652 - 1715
Music; Winchester Old
First published in Thomas Este's Psalter 1592

The Crib is blessed:

When the angels had gone from them into Heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go to Bethlehem and see this things that has happened, which the Lord has made know to us." So they hurried away and found Mary and Joseph and the Baby lying in the manger.

Let us pray that God our Father will bless this Crib and 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 Blessed Virgin Mary for us and for our Salvation. Bless this Crib, which we have prepared to celebrate that Birth; may all who see it be strengthened in Faith and receive the fullness of that life that He came to bring, Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

[Amen.](#)

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 beginning of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

(continued over the page)

He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Thanks be to God.

The Mass is ended. Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the Name of Christ. Amen.

*Hark! the herald-angels sing
Glory to the new-born king,
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled.
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With th' Angelic host proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem."
Hark! the herald-angels etc.*

Christ, by highest Heav'n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold Him come,
Offspring of the Virgin's Womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!
Hail, the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel.
Hark! the herald-angels etc.

(continued over the page)

Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail, the Sun 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 etc

Words: Charles Wesley 1707 - 88

And others

Music: Mendelssohn

From a chorus by Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy 1809 - 47

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------|
| <i>Church Copyright Licence</i> | 571758 |
| <i>Streaming Licence</i> | 162258 |
| <i>Music Reproduction Licence</i> | 571765 |
| <i>CLA Church Licence</i> | 1006292 |