THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: YEAR B

Acolyte

Ian Miles

Acolyte

Acolyte

Ian Miles

Randall Noney

Richard Merchant

Marek Grus

Bernard Ellis

Randall Noney

25th Dec 2023

24th Dec 2023 - Sunday Christmas Eve

First Reading

Deb Breytenbach

Christmas Day

First Reading

Tanya Graham

Katherine Mahns

First Reading

Colleen Baker

Jim Gresser

Phillip Saville

Matt Aldous

Date:

Mass Time:

- 5:00 PM

12:00 AM

Mass Time:

Mass Time:

Vigil: 5:00 PM

8:00 AM

9:30 AM

Date:

8:00 AM

9:30 AM

Date:

CHILDREN'S MASS

25th December 2023

Music

Music

Streeters

<u>Music</u>

No One

No One

Andrew Wilson

Margaret Gresser

Chris Wilson

Prayer of the Faithful

Prayer of the Faithful

Prayer of the Faithful

Vicky Walker

Cecilia Hunt

Katherine Mahns

Tanya Graham

Tom Horsfall

Peta Sparkes

Katherine Mahns

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: YEAR B

St Thomas Aquinas Parish

168 Hawkesbury Road, Springwood, NSW, 2777 PO Box 4410, Winmalee, NSW 2777

Phone: 02 4754 1052; <u>Emergency ONLY</u>: 0474 631 168

Parish Email: email: springwood@parracatholic.org
Parish Website: www.stachurchspringwood.org.au

Parish Facebook Page: St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Community Springwood

Parish Administrator: Rev Christopher del Rosario (E: christopher.del-rosario@parracatholic.org)

Parish Pastoral Council: Email suggestions to springwoodparishpc@gmail.com

Parish Office Hours: Tuesday to Friday 8.30 am - 3.30 pm

Weekend Masses: Saturday Vigil Mass 5:00 pm, Sunday 8:00 am and 9:30 am

Weekday Mass: Monday - Saturday 9:30 am

Reconciliation: Saturday after 9:30 am Mass and 4-5 pm before the Vigil Mass

Children's Liturgy: 3rd Sunday of every month, 9:30 am

Baptisms: 2nd and 4th Sundays of every month - 11 am and by appointment

Weddings: By appointment

Funerals: Please Contact the Parish Office



25th December 2023



Support us! Scan to donate

Kid's Corner

Second Reading

Tom Horsfall

Jim Gresser

Anne Ellis

30th/31st Dec 2023 Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph

Virginia Fortunat

Second Reading

Second Reading

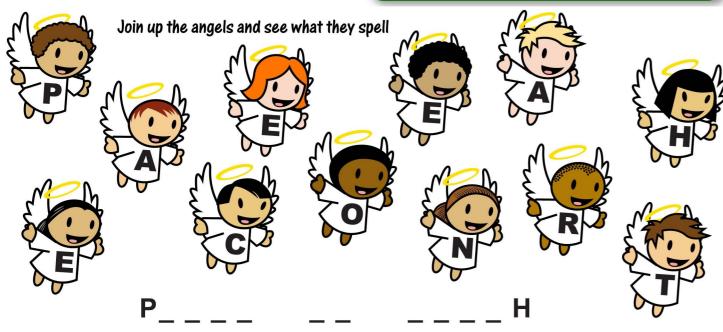
Lynette Boyd

Vicky Walker

Margaret Hickey







We respect the Darug people and their elders both past and present, as the traditional custodians of this land on which we celebrate the Eucharist.

Hope is finally here

In the last two years my family has been blessed with a beautiful niece and nephew. Both children are healthy, joyful, and, like their uncle (me of course) extremely good looking (I'm currently working on eliminating my vanity). My niece and nephew, like all children, are both precious and vulnerable; as parents would know little children need to be monitored at all times to ensure their well-being and safety. This means the child is completely dependant on the parents, without them the child cannot flourish. With this in mind we celebrate one of the great mysteries of our faith. On this day, God, the



creator of Heaven, the Earth, the seas and all it contains, is born a child of our world. He has not arrived on earth descending from the clouds of heaven dressed in his regalia; he comes as a precious and vulnerable infant who is completely dependant on his parents Mary and Joseph. Such is the Mystery we celebrate on Christmas Day.

Looking beyond the decorations, parties and gifts we ask ourselves why do we celebrate this day? What are we celebrating on the Nativity of Our Lord? Hope, dear friends, is what we celebrate. Today the Hope of the Universe becomes one of us. We recall in the Book of Genesis the incredible account of Creation. God made all things and placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden to share in his love. God, true perfection, sought to share his unyielding love with humble humanity. Unfortunately the disobedience of our first parents ruptured our relationship with God; prior to the fall God would converse with humanity like friends walking in the garden. Throughout the Old Testament we witness God constantly calling humanity back to himself through the Patriarchs and the Prophets. They, as great as there were, were not enough. In the end God sends his Son for the very purpose of restoring humanity back to its original design. God desires to be with his people forever; today this idea becomes a reality. Today our hope for a better future in God is realised. Today God enters our human condition! How incredible is this day! Like St. John the Baptist who leapt in the womb of his mother Elizabeth during the Visitation of Our Lady we too rejoice for the Prophesied Messiah, the one to save the nations from the tyranny of sin and death, is now here. The Hope of the World is finally here. Emmanuel, God-is-with-us, is here. Praise God for our King! Praise God for His Son Jesus Christ.

Dear friends as we celebrate the Nativity of Our Lord with our Families and Friends, may we always bear in mind the wonderful gift the Lord has bestowed on us today. May we give thanks to God for the hope he promises us through his Son. May we express with gratitude, through out celebrations, the reality of the Incarnation: Our Hope is here!

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas,

Fr. Chris

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: YEAR B

25th December 2023

At the Vigil Mass



Entrance Antiphon

Today you will know that the Lord will come, and he will save us, and in the morning you will see his glory.

First Reading Isaiah 62:1-5

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

The Lord takes delight in you.

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 Ps 88:4-5. 16-17. 27. 29

R. see v.2

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

- '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.)
- 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.)
- '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 Acts of the Apostles 13:16-17. 22-25

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Paul spoke of Christ, the son of David.

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 living 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 David 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 Matthew 1:18-25

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

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

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 appeared 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 intercourse with her, she gave birth to a

Communion Antiphon Cf Isaiah 40:5

The glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all flesh will see the salvation of our God.

son; and he named him Jesus.

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: YEAR B 25th December 2023

Bishop Vincent's Christmas Message 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters.

"Behold, I am doing a new thing". These words of the prophet Isaiah have provided the inspiration for us to undertake the historic journey of synodality that culminated in our first Diocesan Synod. We have been emboldened to chart a new way forward for the local Church in Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains. Galvanised by the spirit of Jesus that calls us to greater communion, participation and mission, we have been enriched rather than torn apart by our



differences. Though the road towards a new horizon is full of challenges, we have moved decisively towards a model of Church that is rooted in the Trinitarian paradigm of deep mutuality, solidarity and dynamism. This is the Church united to serve that Pope Francis dreams about.

Nowhere else is this summons towards newness more radical and crystal clear than the Incarnation. Christmas is the venue for possibility. Christmas is the in-breaking of the cosmic kingdom of justice, love and peace. In Christ, God has come to make all things new. In Him, the alternative universe of compassion, equality and fraternity to the unjust, corrupt and unsustainable status quo is indeed possible. One can begin to dare to live again and flourish. Humanity is ushered to a new level.

Christmas opens us to the dawn of this new era of God's justice, love and compassion in Christ. The imperial culture of domination, exclusion and consumption can no longer hold sway. The trickle-down economy that favours the rich and disadvantages the poor can no longer be the only viable option. Christmas calls us to place the care of the vulnerable and the stewardship of all God's creation at the centre of human endeavour. A new ethic of communion not just among humans, but with all life forms must guide our way of life.

Christmas offers us the opportunity to join the divine project of reconciling all in Christ. For with the Incarnation, God has reset the cycle of human behaviour. Jesus did not follow the script of the empire. He came as a poor and humble servant in order to minister at the thresholds of human vulnerability. He rejected violence, demonisation and scapegoating. We no longer need to use violence in order to counter violence; or resort to scapegoating mechanisms to drive out opponents. God in Christ enables us to build a new future with the very people whom we regard as outsiders and enemies.

Let us commit ourselves to the task of building a new future at home and abroad. As believers, we cannot remain indifferent to the issues that impact the lives of our brothers and sisters, whether it is the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, the war in Ukraine, the ecological crisis, or the reconciliation with our Indigenous brothers and sisters in the aftermath of the Referendum.

The birth of Jesus signals God's alignment with those who are at the edges of society. Let us pattern our lives on the self-emptying God. Let us learn to abandon our default position of self-interest and mutual exclusion that leads to an unsustainable future. Let us show to others the alternative future that is inspired and guided by the vision of the God of vulnerability and radical communion.

This Christmas, as we contemplate the Christ child in the manger, let us commit ourselves to pray and work for justice in all its manifestations so that God's reign will come in our world.

Bishop Vincent Long OFM Conv

Bishop of Parramatta

Above can also be viewed on line at: https://youtu.be/T7Rn2GyHVis

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: YEAR B

25th December 2023

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: YEAR B 25th December 2023

At the Mass at Dawn



Entrance Antiphon

Today a light will shine upon us, for the Lord is born for

and he will be called Wondrous God, Prince of peace, Father of future ages: and his reign will be without end.

First Reading Isaiah 62:11-12

A reading from the prophet Isaiah Your Saviour is born.

This the Lord proclaims

to the ends of the earth:

Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Look, your saviour comes,

the prize of his victory with him, his trophies before him'.

They shall be called 'The Holy People',

'The Lord's Redeemed'.

And you shall be called 'The-sought-after', 'City-not-forsaken.'

Responsorial Psalm Ps 96:1. 6. 11-12

- (R.) A light will shine on us this day: the Lord is born for us.
- 1. The Lord is king, let earth rejoice, the many coastlands be glad. The skies proclaim his justice; all the peoples see his glory. (R.)
- 2. Light shines forth for the just and joy for the upright of heart. Rejoice, you just, in the Lord; give glory to his holy name. (R.)

Second Reading Titus 3:4-7

A reading from the letter of St Paul to Titus

His own compassion saved us.

When the kindness and love of God our saviour for mankind were revealed, it was not because he was concerned with any righteous actions we might have done ourselves; it was for no reason except his own compassion that he saved us, by means of the cleansing water of rebirth and by renewing us with the Holy Spirit which he has so generously poured over us through Jesus Christ our saviour. He did this so that we should be justified by his grace, to become heirs looking forward to inheriting eternal life.

Gospel Acclamation Luke 2:14

Alleluia, alleluia!

Glory to God in the highest,

peace to his people on earth.

Alleluia!

Gospel Luke 2:15-20

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

The shepherds found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger.

Now when the angels had gone from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us.' So they hurried away and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. When they saw the child they repeated what they had been told about him, and everyone who heard it was astonished at what the shepherds had to say. As for Mary, she treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds went back glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen; it was exactly as they had been told.

Communion Antiphon Cf Zechariah 9:9

Rejoice, O Daughter Sion; lift up praise, Daughter Jerusalem:

Behold, your King will come, the Holy One and Saviour of the world.

At the Mass During the Day

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 Isaiah 52:7-10

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

All the ends of the earth shall see the saving power or 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 Ps 97:1-6. R. v.3

- (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 Hebrews 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;

Second Reading (continued)

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 John 1:1-18

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.

A man came, sent by God. His name was John. He came as a witness, as a witness to speak for the light, so that everyone might believe through him. He was not the light, only a witness to speak for the light.

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.

John appears as his witness, He proclaims:

'This is the one of whom I said: He who comes after me ranks before me because he existed before me.'

Indeed, from his fullness we have, all of us, received yes, grace in return for grace, since, though the Law was

given through Moses, grace and truth have come through Jesus Christ.

No one has ever seen God; it is the only Son, who is nearest to the Father's heart, who has made him

Communion Antiphon Cf Psalm 97:3

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our



Recently Deceased: Marj Egliston, Lillian Pockran

Sick: Fr Bob Bossini, Dane San Pedro, Marama Watson, Margaret Munro, and all Private Intentions.

Due to the strict privacy laws, names of the deceased and sick can only be included in the Bulletin with the express permission of the immediate family. Thank you.

PARISH AND DIOCESAN NEWS

FINANCIALLY SUPPORTING OUR PARISH AND ITS

WORKS: There are a variety of ways you can support our Parish and its Mission:

- QR Code: located on the Bulletin Front Page.
- EFTPOS Machines: located at the back of the Church.
- Direct Debit: Please contact the Parish Office for more details.
- · Direct Deposit: Details are as follows:

Bank Account Name: Springwood

BSB: 067-950

Bank Account Number: 00000560 Reference: Your name in full.

All donations go to maintaining our Church and supporting the various ministries associated with our Parish.

BISHOP'S CHRISTMAS APPEAL: Thank you for giving comfort, faith, and hope to distraught people this Christmas. Fr Fernando Montano Rodriguez, Parramatta Catholic Foundation, and Catholic Care thank you for your kind-hearted generosity and support for people in hospital and prison who might otherwise feel abandoned. Because of your compassion, our Bishop's Christmas Appeal raised over \$1,179.50, which will provide pastoral, spiritual, and sacramental support to people in times of darkness. Thank you.

EPIPHANY PILGRIMAGE 2024: The parishes of the Blue Mountains Deanery will host the Epiphany Pilgrimage from 2 -9 Jan 2024. You are invited to write any prayer requests on the cards provided and place them in the Epiphany Pilgrimage prayer box at the back of the church to be prayed each day by the pilgrims. You can also be a part of the celebrations and help welcome the pilgrims to our beautiful mountains by assisting with the festive meal when they visit us at STA parish on 3rd -4th January. Please contact Colleen Kime on 02 4754 4335/M: 0407 125 427 or leave your details at the parish office.



Start: 15th Jan 2024 4pm; End: 17th Jan 2024 2pm - Cost: \$85 Venue: 'Home of Light', 230 Fairlight Rd, Mulgoa NSW Contact: Sr M Rita Baysari 0493 026 628 srrita@schoenstatt.org.au

PARISH OFFICE HOLIDAY CLOSURE: The Parish Office will be closed for holidays from the Tuesday 26 December 2023 - Monday 15 January 2024. It will reopen on the Tuesday 16 January 2024. Masses and Confessions will continue as normal during this period.

ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT:

Adoration will resume on Monday 5th February 2024. Our new schedule follows:

Monday - Saturday: From 8:15 am - 9:15 am



First Friday Adoration starts from the 1st of March 2024 at 7:00 pm



Wishing you all a Holy and Blessed Christmas with your loved ones. May the Birth of Our Lord bring joy and peace to you and all you encounter! - Fr Chris







Weekend Retreat for Young Women 17+

START: FRIDAY 12TH JAN @ 6.30 PM FINISH: SUNDAY 14TH JAN @ 4 PM*

At the Mass During the Night

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: YEAR B

Entrance Antiphon

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

or

Let us all rejoice in the Lord, for our Saviour has been born in the world

Today true peace has come down to us from heaven.

First Reading Isaiah 9:1-7

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

A son is given to us.

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 Ps 95:1-3. 11-13 R. Lk 2:11

- (R.) Today is born our Saviour, Christ the Lord.
- O sing a new song to the Lord, sing to the Lord all the earth.
 O sing to the Lord, bless his name. (R.)
- 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.)
- With justice he will rule the world, he will judge the peoples with his truth. (R.)

Second Reading Titus 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 human 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 wickedness and to purify a people so that it could be his very own and would have no ambition except to do good.

Gospel Acclamation Luke 2:10-11

Alleluia, alleluia!

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

Gospel Luke 2:1-14

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 governor 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 together 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.'

Communion Antiphon John 1:14

The Word became flesh, and we have seen his glory.