

Today the Church celebrates the Birth of Jesus Christ, the first day in the octave of Christmas. Throughout Advent the Church longed ardently for the coming of our Saviour. Today she celebrates His birth with unrestrained joy. *"The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us."* The Son of God became man to give us a share in that divine life which is eternally His in the Blessed Trinity. Christmas time begins on December 24 with the first Vespers of the feast and ends on the feast of the Baptism of Christ. White vestments reappear in our churches as a sign that the Christmas feast is a festival full of joy.

The Eternal Word has become Man and dwells among us. The longings of the patriarchs and prophets are fulfilled. With the shepherds we hurry to the manger and adore the Incarnate Son of God, who for us and for our salvation descended upon earth. The purpose of the Christmas feast is beautifully expressed in the Preface of the Nativity: "For by the mystery of the Word made flesh the light of Thy glory hath shone anew upon the eyes of our mind; so that while we acknowledge Him a God seen by men, we may be drawn by Him to the love of things unseen."

THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH

Today: 9:30am <i>Intention:</i>	CHRISTMASS DAY PARISH MASS at <i>St Mary & St Giles</i> <i>Our Parishes</i>
Monday: 8:00am <i>Pray for:</i>	St Stephen, Proto-Martyr Mass at <i>St Mary & St Giles</i> <i>St Stephen's House, Oxford</i>
Tuesday: 10:30am <i>Intention:</i>	St John, Apostle, Evangelist Mass + Elevenses at <i>All Saints</i> <i>Bishop Jonathan</i>
Wednesday: 7:30pm <i>Intention:</i>	The Holy Innocents, Martyrs Mass at <i>St Mary & St Giles</i> <i>For all sick & dying children;</i> <i>and for the right to life to be upheld</i>
Thursday: 10:30am <i>Intention:</i>	St Thomas Becket, Bishop, Martyr Mass at <i>St Mary & St Giles</i> <i>The Archbishop of Canterbury and for Dean</i> <i>& Chapter of his Cathedral</i>
Friday: 12:15pm <i>Intention:</i>	THE HOLY FAMILY Mass at <i>St Mary & St Giles</i> <i>For the protection of the Family</i>
Next Sunday: 9:30am 11:00am	SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD PARISH MASS at <i>St Mary & St Giles</i> FAMILY MASS at <i>All Saints</i>

Thank you.

Fr Ross & Sister Janet, Fr Joseph, Fr Tunji and Mrs Adebiyi & their children wish to thank everyone who has sent them presents, greetings cards and good wishes this Christmastide.



St Mary & St Giles, Stony Stratford

CHRISTMAS DAY

25th December AD 2016



Welcome to the Parish Church where, after the example of the early church, we celebrate the Eucharist: the "apostles teaching and fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42)

Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection, through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

The Order of Mass can be found in this Sheet, along with the references to the Scripture Readings which may be either listened to or followed in the Bibles provided. The Psalm and the Prayer of the Faithful are also included in this Sheet. Hymns are unannounced but are indicated on the boards towards the front of the Nave.



A Loop System is in operation at St Mary & St Giles - please set hearing aids to the "T" position.



Access for the Disabled at St Mary & St Giles is via the path on the north side of the church. At All Saints it is via the South Porch.



Gluten-Free Hosts: if you are on a Gluten-Free diet and would like a Gluten-Free Host when you receive Holy Communion please mention this before Mass to one of the Sides men or women who will arrange this for you. Please make yourself known to the Parish Priest so that he is aware of your need.

Collections: for the continuing mission of Christ are taken while the altar and gifts of bread and wine are being prepared. If you are a visitor and a taxpayer and would like to make a donation please use the Gift Aid envelopes provided at the end of each row - please fill in your details. This enables us to reclaim, from the Inland Revenue, 25p for each £1 donated.

We observe a period of quiet prayer and reflection before the celebration of Mass, between the end of the Organ Voluntary and the Sacristy Bell being rung, in order that we may be better prepared to worship almighty God.

At the entry of the ministers a hymn may be sung. (STAND)

**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 from God, Light from Light eternal,
lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
only-begotten Son of the Father;**

**Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
glory to God, glory in the highest;**

**Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing;**

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

In the name of the Father, ✠ and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The priest greets the people

The grace and peace of God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you
and also with you.

Penitential Rite

The priest invites the people to call to mind their sins and repent of them, after which there is a pause for silent reflection.

Lord Jesus, you are mighty God and Prince of peace: Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are Son of God and Son of Mary:
Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are Word made flesh and splen-

THE CONCLUDING RITE

STAND

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

When he came among us as a man,
the Son of God scattered the darkness of this world,
and filled this holy day with his glory.
May the God of infinite goodness
scatter the darkness of sin
and brighten your hearts with holiness.

Amen.

God sent his angels to shepherds
to herald the great joy of our Saviour's birth.
May he fill you with joy
and make you heralds of his gospel.

Amen.

When the Word became man,
earth was joined to heaven.
May he give you his peace and goodwill,
and fellowship with all the heavenly host.

Amen.

May almighty God bless you,
the Father, ✠ and the Son,
and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Go in the peace of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

The recessional hymn is sung:

**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 the angelic host proclaim,
'Christ is born in Bethlehem.'**

*Hark, the herald-angels sing
glory to the new-born King.*

Christ, by highest heaven 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.

**Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace:
hail, the Sun of Righteousness.
Light and life to all he brings,
risen 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.**

What can I give Him,
 Poor as I am?
 If I were a shepherd
 I would bring a lamb,
 If I were a wise man
 I would do my part,
 Yet what I can I give Him,
 Give my heart.

* * * * *

Prayer after Communion (STAND)

Let us pray.

And all pray in silence with the Priest for a while, unless the silence has just been observed. Then the priest, with hands extended, says the Prayer after Communion; at the end of which the people acclaim: Amen.

All then pray:

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.

The Blessing of the Christmas Crib

The priest, accompanied by the servers, takes the figure of the Infant Christ from the altar (where it represented the link between his coming to us in Bethlehem - the House of Bread - and his coming to us now in the Eucharist under the veils of bread and wine) and places it in the crib. The crib is then blessed.

Let us ask for God's blessing on
 this Christmas manger and upon ourselves,
 that we who reflect on the birth of Jesus
 may share in the salvation he accomplished.

O God of every nation and people,
 from the very beginning of creation
 you have made manifest your love:
 when our need for a Saviour was great
 you sent your Son
 to be born of the Virgin Mary.

To our lives he brings joy and peace,
 justice, mercy, and love.

Lord, bless, ✠ hallow and consecrate this manger,
 and all who look upon it;
 may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus,
 and raise up our thoughts to him,
 who is God-with-us and Saviour of all,
 and who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The Lighting of the Christ Candle

The priest invites a child to light the Christ Candle on the Advent Wreath, and then leads the people in prayer:

Blessed are you, Sovereign Lord, King of Peace: to you be praise and glory for ever! The new light of your incarnate Word gives gladness in our sorrow, and a presence in our isolation. Fill our lives with your light, until they overflow with gladness and praise.
Blessed be God for ever.

Any brief notices may be given at this point.

dour of the Father: Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

The priest pronounces the general absolution

May almighty God have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.
Amen.

The Gloria in excelsis

(‘Mass of Christ the Saviour’ Setting)

**Glory to God, Glory to God,
 Glory to God in the highest,
 and on earth, peace on earth,
 peace to people of good will.**

**We praise you, we bless you,
 we adore you, we glorify you,
 we give you thanks for your great glory,
 Lord God, heavenly King,
 O God, almighty Father.**

**Glory to God, Glory to God,
 Glory to God in the highest,
 and on earth, peace on earth,
 peace to people of good will.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
 Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
 you take away the sins of the world,
 have mercy on us;
 you take away the sins of the world,
 receive our prayer.
 you are seated at the right hand,
 the right hand of the Father,
 have mercy on us.**

**Glory to God, Glory to God,
 Glory to God in the highest,
 and on earth, peace on earth,
 peace to people of good will.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,
 you alone are the Lord,
 you alone are the Most High,
 Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
 in the glory of God the Father.**

**Glory to God, Glory to God,
 Glory to God in the highest,
 and on earth, peace on earth,
 peace to people of good will. Amen. Amen.**

The Collect

Let us pray.

Almighty God, you have given us your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin: grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; 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.**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD (SIT)

The First Reading

Isaiah 52:7-10

(Old Testament Page 621 in the Bibles) Isaiah reaches a high point of exultation. His theme is the return of the Jewish exiles from Babylon. He sees

the messenger running along the mountain ridges proclaiming the news of their deliverance. The same note of joy runs through the entire reading, which here refers to much more than the return of Jewish exiles to Jerusalem. It is a poem of joy for our redemption.

The Responsorial Psalm (from Psalm 98)

**R/. All the ends of the earth have seen
the salvation of our God.**

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

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. ®

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

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. ®

The Second Reading Hebrews 1:1-6

(New Testament Page 190 in the Bibles) Jesus is the Son who is the heir of all things as he bears the very stamp of God's nature.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

A hallowed day has shone upon us:
come, O nations, and adore the Lord;
for today a great light has come down to earth.
Alleluia!

The Gospel John 1:1-18

(New Testament Page 78 in the Bibles) One of the most sublime passages of all scripture, the prologue to St John's Gospel, a summary of his reflections on the meaning of the incarnation.

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

As the Gospel is announced the people respond:

✠ ✠ ✠ **Glory to you, O Lord.**

At the conclusion of the Gospel Reading:

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The Homily

The Nicene Creed (STAND)

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

**Glory be to God the Father,
glory be to God the Son
glory to the Holy Spirit,
Persons three, yet Godhead One.
Glory be from all creation
while eternal ages run;
evermore and evermore!**

* * *

Refrain:

***Come, come, come to the manger,
Children, come to the children's King;
Sing, sing, chorus of angels,
Stars of morning, o'er Bethlehem sing.***

**He lies 'mid the beasts of the stall,
Who is Maker and Lord of us all,
The wintry wind blows cold and dreary,
See, He weeps, the world is weary,
Lord, have pity and mercy on me. *Refrain***

**He leaves all His glory behind,
To be born and to die for mankind;
With grateful beasts His cradle chooses,
Thankless man His love refuses,
Lord, have pity and mercy on me. *Refrain***

**To Bethlehem's manger now come,
To the Saviour Emmanuel's home;
The heav'nly hosts above are singing,
Set the Christmas bells a-ringing,
Lord, have pity and mercy on me. *Refrain***

* * *

**In the bleak mid-winter
Frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron,
Water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak mid-winter
Long ago.**

**Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him
Nor earth sustain;
Heaven and earth shall flee away
When He comes to reign:
In the bleak mid-winter
A stable-place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty,
Jesus Christ.**

**Enough for Him, whom cherubim
Worship night and day,
A breastful of milk
And a mangerful of hay;
Enough for Him, whom angels
Fall down before,
The ox and ass and camel
Which adore.**

**Angels and archangels
May have gathered there,
Cherubim and seraphim
Thronged the air,
But His mother only,
In her maiden bliss,
Worshipped the Beloved
With a kiss.**

The priest breaks the consecrated bread during:

The Agnus Dei

(KNEEL)

('Mass of Christ the Saviour' Setting)

Jesus, Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Jesus, Bread of Life, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Jesus, Cup of Hope, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Jesus, Prince of Peace, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Jesus, Word of Love, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Jesus, Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

The priest shows the consecrated Host to the people, saying:

Behold the Lamb of God,
behold Him who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called
to the supper of the Lamb.

**✕ Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

The Choir sing an Anthem following which Carols are sung quietly as the people reverently receive Holy Communion.

**Of the Father's love begotten,
ere the worlds began to be,
he is Alpha and Omega,
he the source, the ending he,
of the things that are, that have been,
and that future years shall see,
evermore and evermore!**

**By his word was all created;
he commanded; it was done:
heaven and earth and depths of ocean
universe of three in one,
all that grows beneath the shining
of the light of moon and sun,
evermore and evermore!**

**Blessed was the day for ever
when the Virgin, full of grace,
by the Holy Ghost conceiving,
bore the Saviour of our race;
and the Child, the world's Redeemer,
first revealed his sacred face,
evermore and evermore!**

**O ye heights of heaven, adore him;
angels and archangels sing!
Every creature bow before him
singing praise to God our King;
let no earthly tongue be silent,
all the world with homage ring,
evermore and evermore!**

**He, by prophets sung, is here now,
promised since the world began,
now on earth in flesh descended
to atone for sins of man.
All creation praise its Master,
see fulfilment of his plan:
evermore and evermore.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

(on this day it is customary for all those present to genuflect during the next three lines)

**by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.**

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Prayer of the Faithful

Priest: My brothers and sisters, at this season, the kindness and love of God our Saviour has appeared among us. Let us offer our prayers to God, not trusting in our own good deeds, but in his love for all mankind.

Intercessor: For the Church of God..... that we will joyfully proclaim and live our faith in Christ the Word who was born for us of the sinless Virgin Mary, let us pray to the Lord:

V/. Lord, hear us.

R/. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

For the peace & well-being of the whole world..... that God's gifts to us in this life will lead to salvation in the world to come, let us pray to the Lord:

For our community and our families, who welcome Christ into their lives..... that they learn to receive him in the poor and suffering people of this world, let us pray to the Lord:

For those who suffer from hunger, sickness or loneliness.....that the mystery of Christ's birth will bring them health and peace, let us pray to the Lord:

For those who have died recently...and for those whose anniversaries of death occur on this day...
25th Gladys Clarke, Amy Dolling... let us pray to

the Lord:

✠ Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord.

And let light perpetual shine upon them.

Priest: Lord God, Mary gave birth to your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord, in purity and love. May she bring our prayers before you, for we make them in the name of Jesus the Lord. **Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Once in royal David's city
stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby
in a manger for his bed:
**Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.**

He came down to earth from heaven,
who is God and Lord of all,
and his shelter was a stable,
and his cradle was a stall;
with the poor, the scorned, the lowly,
lived on earth our Saviour holy.

And, through all his wondrous childhood,
he would honour and obey,
love and watch the lowly maiden
in whose gentle arms he lay:
Christian children all must be
mild, obedient, good as he.

For he is our childhood's pattern,
day by day like us he grew;
he was little, weak and helpless,
tears and smiles like us he knew.
and he feeleth for our sadness,
and he shareth in our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see him,
through his own redeeming love;
for that Child who seemed so helpless
is our Lord in heaven above;
and he leads his children on
to the place where he is gone.

Not in that poor lowly stable,
with the oxen standing round,
we shall see him; but in heaven,
set at God's right hand on high;
when like stars his children crowned,
all in white shall wait around.

(STAND)

Pray brethren that my sacrifice and yours
may be acceptable to God the almighty Father.

**May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your
hands for the praise and glory of his name,
for our good and the good of all his Church.**

The priest says the Prayer over the Gifts to which all respond:
Amen.

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

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

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give him thanks and praise.

*The priest prays the preface in which God is praised for his
might works.*

*All join in the Sanctus & Benedictus (KNEEL)
(‘Mass of Christ the Saviour’ Setting)*

**Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts.
Heaven and earth are full,
are full of your glory.
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes,
who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.**

*The priest continues the Eucharistic Prayer of thanksgiving,
recalling the command of Jesus Christ, ‘Do this in memory of
me.’*

Priest: The mystery of faith:

**All: We proclaim your Death, O Lord,
and profess your Resurrection
until you come again.**

*The Eucharistic Prayer continues with the priest interceding
for the Church, the world, all those present at this celebration,
and the Faithful Departed.*

*At the Doxology at the end of the Eucharistic Prayer all join in
the Great Amen.*

Priest:for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

The priest introduces the Lord's Prayer: (STAND)

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, gra-
ciously grant peace in our days, that, by the help
of your mercy we may be always free from sin
and safe from all distress, as we await the
blessed hope and the coming of our Saviour, Je-
sus Christ.

**For the kingdom, the power and the glory are
yours, now and for ever.**

Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles:
Peace I leave you, my peace I give you, look not
on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, and
graciously grant her peace and unity in accord-
ance with your will. Who live and reign for ever
and ever. **Amen.**

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

Let us offer each other the sign of peace.