

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and 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.

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 of the Father,
have mercy on us.

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.
Amen.

COLLECT

O God, who were pleased to give us
the shining example of the Holy Family,
graciously grant that we may imitate them
in practising the virtues of family life and in
the bonds of charity,
and so, in the joy of your house,
delight one day in eternal rewards.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of
the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING Samuel 1:20-22, 24-28

A reading from the first book of Samuel.

Hannah conceived and gave birth to a son,
and called him Samuel "since" she said "I
asked the Lord for him."

When a year had gone by, the husband
Elkanah went up again with all his family to
offer the annual sacrifice to the Lord and to
fulfil his vow. Hannah, however, did not go
up, having said to her husband, "Not before
the child is weaned. Then I will bring him and
present him before the Lord and he shall stay
there for ever."

When she had weaned him, she took him
up with her together with a three-year-old
bull, an ephah of flour and a skin of wine, and
she brought him to the temple of the Lord at
Shiloh; and the child was with them. They
slaughtered the bull and the child's mother
came to Eli. She said, "If you please, my lord.
As you live, my lord, I am the woman who
stood here beside you, praying to the Lord.
This is the child I prayed for, and the Lord
granted me what I asked him. Now I make
him over to the Lord for the whole of his life.
He is made over to the Lord."

There she left him, for the Lord.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalms 83

Response:

**They are happy who dwell in your house,
O Lord.**

- How lovely is your dwelling place
Lord, God of hosts.
My soul is longing and yearning,

is yearning for the courts of the Lord.
My heart and my soul ring out their joy
to God, the living God. (R.)

- They are happy, who dwell in your house,
for ever singing your praise.
They are happy, whose strength is in you;
they walk with ever growing strength. (R.)

- O Lord, God of hosts, hear my prayer,
give ear, O God of Jacob.
Turn your eyes, O God, our shield,
look on the face of your anointed. (R.)

SECOND READING John 3:1-2, 21-24

A reading from the first letter of St John.

Think of the love that the Father has lavished
on us,
by letting us be called God's children;
and that is what we are.
Because the world refused to acknowledge
him,
therefore it does not acknowledge us.
My dear people, we are already the children
of God
but what we are to be in the future has not
yet been revealed,
all we know is, that when it is revealed
we shall be like him
because we shall see him as he really is.

My dear people,
if we cannot be condemned by our own
conscience,
we need not be afraid in God's presence,
and whatever we ask him
we shall receive,
because we keep his commandments
and live the kind of life that he wants.
His commandments are these:
that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus
Christ
and that we love one another
as he told us to.

Whoever keeps his commandments
lives in God and God lives in him.

We know that he lives in us
by the Spirit that he has given us.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Open our heart, O Lord,
to accept the words of your Son. Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Luke 2:41-52

A reading from the holy Gospel according to
Luke.

Every year the parents of Jesus used to go
to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover.
When he was twelve years old, they went
up for the feast as usual. When they were
on their way home after the feast, the boy
Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem without
his parents knowing it. They assumed he
was with the caravan, and it was only after a
day's journey that they went to look for him
among their relations and acquaintances.
When they failed to find him they went back
to Jerusalem looking for him everywhere.

Three days later, they found him in the
Temple, sitting among the doctors, listening
to them and asking them questions; and all
those who heard him were astounded at
his intelligence and his replies. They were
overcome when they saw him, and his
mother said to him, "My child, why have you
done this to us? See how worried your father

and I have been, looking for you." "Why were
you looking for me?" he replied. "Did you not
know that I must be busy with my Father's
affairs?" But they did not understand what he
meant.

He then went down with them and came to
Nazareth and lived under their authority. His
mother stored up all these things in her heart.
And Jesus increased in wisdom, in stature,
and in favour with God and men.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with
the Father;

through him all things were made.

For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,

(all bow during the next three lines)

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the
Virgin Mary,
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under

Pontius Pilate,

he suffered death and was buried,

and rose again on the third day

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.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,

the giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son,

who with the Father and the Son is adored

and glorified,

who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and

apostolic Church.

I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness

of sins

and I look forward to the resurrection of the

dead

and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

We offer you, Lord, the sacrifice of
conciliation,

humbly asking that,

through the intercession of the Virgin Mother

of God and Saint Joseph,

you may establish our families firmly in your

grace and your peace.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Our God has appeared on the earth, and
lived among us.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Bring those you refresh with this heavenly

Sacrament,

most merciful Father,

to imitate constantly the example of the Holy

Family,

so that, after the trials of this world,

we may share their company for ever.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

30 DECEMBER 2018

Sunday Message

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

THE WORD

Year C • Season Colour: White • Psalter Week 1

Today's episode from the Gospel is usually called 'The Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple', and brings to an end the Infancy Narrative of Luke.

It is the only story we have which concerns the childhood of Jesus. It is a very human story, the worst nightmare of every parent of a child who has begun to use their freedom to move about independently. In the case of this boy it is pointing towards his own future which his parents only discern dimly.

It might be better if we read this incident in the light of Luke's artistic skill as a writer. The first two chapters set out the main themes which the evangelist will later develop. One of these motifs is that even the most devout and faithful person can misunderstand who Jesus is and what he means.

We also find details in this scene which anticipate the resurrection: for example three days; Luke's connecting being lost with being dead, and being found with coming back to life; Jesus question, "Why are you looking for me?" corresponds to the angel's question to the women about looking for the living among the dead. Perhaps the most poignant feature here is that just at the moment when his distraught parents (as Luke refers to them) find Jesus, he has entered the stage which every adolescent has to undergo, that of separating from them in order to establish his own identity and to fulfil his calling in life. That is why he is "busy with my Father's affairs" (rather than being "in my Father's house"). Once more, the fact of Jesus being a true human being comes to the fore: he has to grow up like all of us (hopefully) in wisdom, in stature, and in favour with God and other people. ■

LEARN

Passover was one of the three pilgrimage feasts when faithful Jews were expected to travel to Jerusalem if possible for the feast.

Pilgrims would travel in groups (caravans) for safety and companionship.

The presentation of Jesus as a boy of twelve possibly indicates his readiness to accept adult religious responsibilities.

SAY

Jesus, Mary and Joseph!



REFLECT

Any parent will be able to identify with the powerful emotions which Luke ascribes to Mary and Joseph in this narrative. We have the loss of a child and the desperate search for him over three days. Then there is the relief at finding him safe and sound; this is followed by bewilderment, first of all at his apparent indifference to the anxiety he has caused them and then the perplexing reference to "my Father's affairs". Not even the fact that he appears to be instructing the recognised teachers of the Law seems to help them understand what is going on. The attitude, characteristic of many adolescents – What are you getting so excited about? – will no doubt be all too familiar to parents of teenagers.

It is easy, and perhaps dangerous, to idealise the Holy Family by imagining a completely peaceful and idyllic life in Nazareth. For all we know it may well have been. But the further we remove Mary and Joseph from our own human experience, the less we can identify with them; and the doctrine of the Incarnation, that Jesus is truly divine and truly human, becomes less and less meaningful. ■

DO

Consider a child who is twelve years old. How could he or she help you to understand better our belief in Jesus as a true human being?

