

MIDNIGHT MASS and CHRISTMAS DAY—Sunday 24th / Monday 25th December 2023
COLLECT, READINGS AND POST COMMUNION PRAYER

THE COLLECT for Midnight Mass

Eternal God, in the stillness of this night you sent your almighty Word to pierce the world's darkness with the light of salvation: give to the earth the peace that we long for and fill our hearts with the joy of heaven; through our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

THE COLLECT for Christmas Day

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.

1st READING: Isaiah 52:7-10

⁷ How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.'

⁸ Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices, together they sing for joy; for in plain sight they see the return of the Lord to Zion. ⁹ Break forth together into singing, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the Lord has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem.

¹⁰ The Lord has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

2nd READING: Hebrews 1:1-4 [5-12]

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. ³He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

[⁵ For to which of the angels did God ever say, '*You are my Son; today I have begotten you*'? Or again, '*I will be his Father, and he will be my Son*'? ⁶And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, '*Let all God's angels worship him*.' ⁷Of the angels he says, '*He makes his angels winds, and his servants flames of fire*.' ⁸But of the Son he says, '*Your throne,*

O God, is for ever and ever, and the righteous sceptre is the sceptre of your kingdom. ⁹ *You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.'* ¹⁰And, '*In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands;* ¹¹ *they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like clothing;* ¹² *like a cloak you will roll them up, and like clothing they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will never end.'*]

THE GOSPEL: John 1:1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ 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.

THE POST COMMUNION PRAYER

God our Father, whose Word has come among us in the Holy Child of Bethlehem: may the light of faith illumine our hearts and shine in our words and deeds; through him who is Christ the Lord.