

# The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ

December 24, 2023, 4:00 pm



Max Reger

## The Word of God

*Prelude*

*"The Virgin Slumber Song"*

### The Opening Acclamation

Celebrant Blessed be God, ✠ Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**People And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

### The Collect for Purity

Celebrant Almighty God,

**All to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**People And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us pray.

O God, you make us glad by the yearly festival of the birth of your only Son Jesus Christ: Grant that we, who joyfully receive him as our Redeemer, may with sure confidence behold him when he comes to be our Judge; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Celebrant Please be seated.

### The Christmas Pageant as depicted by The Saint Francis Ecclesiastical Theater Co.

Narrator: The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy--the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, to Bethlehem, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed.

Hymn 79, verses 1 and 2, "Oh Little Town of Bethlehem

Narrator: And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. The angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby 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 those with whom he is pleased!" When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Hymn 101, verses 1 and 2, "Away in the Manger"

Narrator: Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: "'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.'" Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.

Hymn 128, verses 1 and 2, "We Three Kings"

The Sermon            The Rev. Jason Shelby

*There will be a moment of silence for reflection following the sermon.*

*Please stand as able, and join in saying,*

## The Nicene Creed

**All** We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.  
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 and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven:  
by the power of the Holy Spirit  
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made human.  
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,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who 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.

*Please remain standing, as able, for*

The Prayers of the People *(the People read the responses in bold)*

Celebrant Let us pray for the Church and for the world.  
Grant, Almighty God, that all who confess your Name may be united in your truth,  
live together in your love, and reveal your glory in the world.

*Silence*

Celebrant Lord, in your mercy  
**People Hear our prayer.**

Deacon Guide the people of this land, and of all the nations, in the ways of justice and peace;  
that we may honor one another and serve the common good.

*Silence*

Celebrant Lord, in your mercy  
**People Hear our prayer.**

Celebrant Give us all a reverence for the earth as your own creation, that we may use its re-  
sources rightly in the service of others and to your honor and glory.

*Silence*

Celebrant Lord, in your mercy  
**People Hear our prayer.**

*Silence*

Celebrant Bless all whose lives are closely linked with ours, and grant that we may serve Christ in them, and love one another as he loves us.

Celebrant Lord, in your mercy  
**People Hear our prayer.**

*Silence*

Celebrant Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; give them courage and hope in their troubles, and bring them the joy of your salvation.

*Silence*

Celebrant Lord, in your mercy  
**People Hear our prayer.**

Celebrant We commend to your mercy all who have died, that your will for them may be fulfilled; and we pray that we may share with all your saints in your eternal kingdom.

*Silence*

Celebrant Lord, in your mercy  
**People Hear our prayer.**

Celebrant: Hasten, O Father, the coming of thy kingdom; and grant that we thy servants, who now live by faith, may with joy behold thy Son at his coming in glorious majesty; even Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Advocate. Amen.

Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

The Peace

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

*Ministers and People exchange signs of peace in the name of the Lord.*

*Please be seated.*

Welcome, Announcements

## The Holy Communion

Offertory Anthem

“Three French Carols”  
“Deck the Hall”

arr. Donald Moore  
arr. Kirby Shaw

## The Great Thanksgiving

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

**People And also with you.**

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

**People We lift them to the Lord.**

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Because you gave Jesus Christ, your only Son, to be born for us; who, by the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, was made perfect Man of the flesh of the Virgin Mary his mother; so that we might be delivered from the bondage of sin, and receive power to become your children. Countless throngs of angels stand before you to serve you night and day; and, beholding the glory of your presence, they offer you unceasing praise. Joining with them, and giving voice to every creature under heaven, we acclaim you, and glorify your Name, as we say:

Celebrant and People

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

*Please kneel or stand, as able, as the Celebrant continues.*

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he 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. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

*Celebrant and People*

**We remember his death,**

**We proclaim his resurrection,**

**We await his coming in glory;**

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine. We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with Francis and all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

Celebrant And now, as Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

**All 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.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.**

### The Breaking of the Bread

*The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.*

Celebrant Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;  
**Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

### The Invitation

Celebrant The gifts of God for the people of God, Holy gifts, for Holy people.

For our online community—*an invitation to pray together the spiritual communion prayer from the National Cathedral. A spiritual communion is a personal devotional that anyone can pray at any time to express their desire to receive Holy Communion at that moment, but in which circumstances impede them from actually receiving Holy Communion.*

My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. As though you have already come, I embrace you and unite myself entirely to you; never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

*(St. Alphonsus de Liguori, 1696-1787)*

## The Communion of the People

*All are invited to receive Holy Communion. Please follow the directions of the ushers. If you do not wish to receive, we encourage you to come forward to receive a blessing. Simply fold your hands across your chest when you come forward. The clergy will carry Communion to anyone in the congregation who is unable to come forward. Please notify an usher if you wish Communion to be brought to you. Gluten-free Communion wafers are available. If you require one of these, simply ask.*

*If you have come with a particular prayer concern today, after receiving Communion you may come to the Nason Prayer Chapel to the right of the altar rail where someone will also be available to pray with you, or you may just choose to light a candle.*

*Please kneel or stand, as able for,*

## The Post Communion Prayer

Celebrant Let us pray.

**All Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## The Blessing

Celebrant Go forth into the world in peace. Be of good courage, Hold fast to that which is good. Render to no one evil for evil. Strengthen the fainthearted, support the weak, help the afflicted. Honor all persons.

Love and serve the lord, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit. And, the blessing of God Almighty, The ✠ Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit be with you always.

**All Amen.**

## The Sending Forth

Deacon Let us go forth in the name of Christ. Alleluia! Alleluia!

**People Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

*Please stand, as able, and join in singing*

The Closing Hymn

**Go Tell it on the Mountain**

**Hymn #99**

Postlude:

*Joy to the World/Adeste Fiedelis"*

*arr. David Knight*

## Welcome!!

We warmly welcome you if you are here with us for the first time today. We joyfully welcome *all* people into our community – without exception. Whoever you are, and whatever the status of your relationship with God, you will find fellow travelers here.

*Please join us for coffee fellowship after the service.  
The Ushers will direct you.*

## Prayers this Week

We pray for all those who serve in the armed and foreign services, and for their families, especially Thomas, Drew Deley, Michael Heredia, Mark Kappelmann, Joseph Leahy, TJ Malzahn, Will Piepenbring, Scott Ruston, Michael Strong, Barry Witt, Jonathan Zimmerman and Steve.

Those who are ill, recovering from surgery, or in any other kind of need or trouble:  
Ana, Andrea, Christa, Jean Dicus, Daniel Dreiling, Pauline Duley, Elvis, Ceri Falk, Colette Furbush, Chris Goldsmith, Sally Hill, Loren, Mick Mohuchy, Patt Parker, Bruce Schaefer, Roxanne Wall, and for the people of the middle east, and victims of violence everywhere.

We pray for all who have died, that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom.

## What's Happening!

### **Art Camp – January 3-5th, 9am–11:30pm**

Camp for all kids age 5-11, contact Claire to reserve a spot: [claire.erbeznik@stfrancispalosverdes.org](mailto:claire.erbeznik@stfrancispalosverdes.org)

### **Quilters & Knitters – Thursdays 1-3pm, Boardroom**

Is your New Years resolution to spend more time on needlework? Think about joining our weekly quilting, knitting, embroidering, and crochet group and share ideas and knowledge!

### Ongoing

**Bible Study on Zoom**—Contacts: Jack Hailwood, [john.w.hailwood@outlook.com](mailto:john.w.hailwood@outlook.com) or Suellen Eslinger, [suellenesl@verizon.net](mailto:suellenesl@verizon.net)

### **Yoga**

**Mondays from 11:30am –1:00pm - All Levels Hatha Yoga** for Strength and Mobility.

**Wednesdays 9:00-10:30am All Levels Gentle Yoga** for Vital Mobility and Balance.

(free-will offering).

Contact: Jill Lynch—[jillfenskelynych@gmail.com](mailto:jillfenskelynych@gmail.com)

**AA**—Thursdays & Sundays 7:30 pm, **AI-Anon**—Thursdays 7:00pm

### Our Clergy

**The Rev. Jason Shelby, Rector**, [jason.shelby@stfrancispalosverdes.org](mailto:jason.shelby@stfrancispalosverdes.org)

Direct Line: (310) 594-7984, Church Office: (310) 375-4617

**The Rev. Celeste Stump**, Deacon, Chaplain at The Canterbury, [cstump@thecanterbury.org](mailto:cstump@thecanterbury.org)

Direct Line: (310) 913-1069

### Children and families

Contact: Kristina Pelá, [krab3@yahoo.com](mailto:krab3@yahoo.com)

### Our Staff

**Dr. Mark Bennett**, (310) 594-7416, [mark.bennett@stfrancispalosverdes.org](mailto:mark.bennett@stfrancispalosverdes.org), Director of Music

**Ms. Claire Erbeznik**, (310) 375 4617, [claire.erbeznik@stfrancispalosverdes.org](mailto:claire.erbeznik@stfrancispalosverdes.org), Office

Administrator & Receptionist

**Mr. David Knight**, Organist

**Mr. Joel Miranda**, Sexton

**Mrs. Elaine Mistele**, (310) 594-8268, [elaine.mistele@stfrancispalosverdes.org](mailto:elaine.mistele@stfrancispalosverdes.org), Business Manager



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