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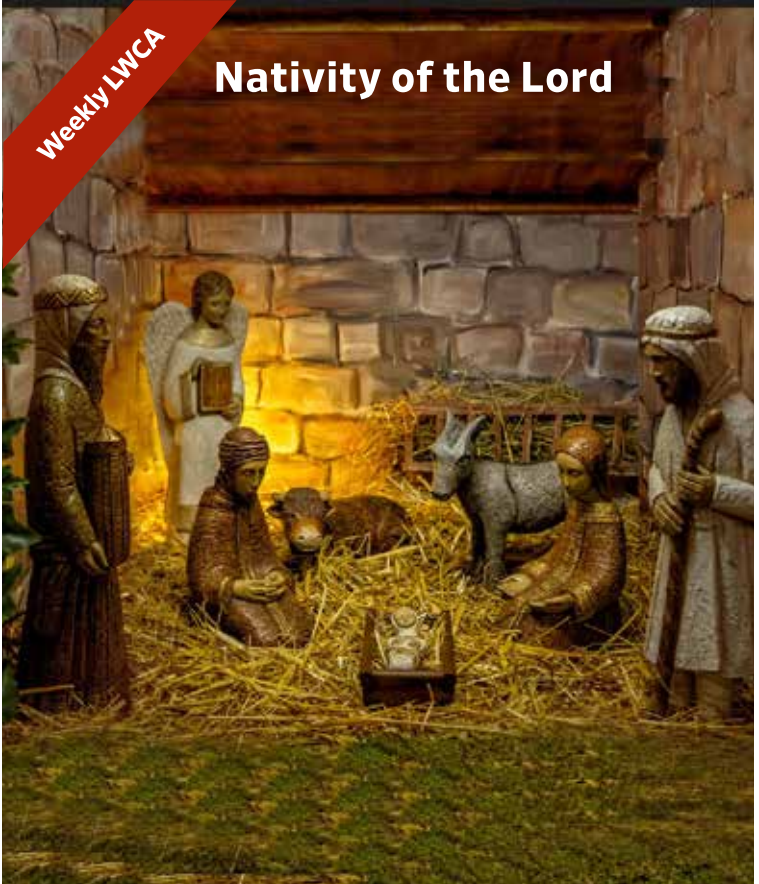
# Living with Christ

GROWING UP DAILY WITH THE GOOD NEWS

Weekly LWCA

## Nativity of the Lord

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# Contents

Living with Christ December 2023

## 1 Editorial

### **Praying with the Church**

#### 2 Pope's Prayer Intention

#### 3-5 Focus on the Holy Mass

*Some Liturgical Symbols (II)*

### **Daily Readings and commentaries**

#### 6-14 December 24

*Nativity of the Lord (Vigil Mass)*

#### 15-37 December 25

*Nativity of the Lord*

#### 38-61 December 26-30

*Octave of Christmas*

#### **Liturgical texts:**

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**On our cover:** Baby Jesus in a Manger

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# Editorial

December 2023



Rev. Fr. Walter C. Ihejirika, Nigeria

## The Colour of Love

This liturgical week contains what we can consider as contrasting celebrations. We start on a very joyful note with the celebration of Christmas – the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ. At Christmas, we believe that our eternal God assumed our human nature in order to raise us up to the divine level. Shortly after this joyful event, we celebrate the sorrowful martyrdom of St Stephen and that of the Holy Innocents. In the Church, different colours are used to designate different celebrations. The colour white is used for the joyful, while red is used for martyrs. In this week, these two liturgical colours are prominent.

When white and red colours are combined, they produce colour pink. Symbolically, pink is seen as the colour of love. It is a colour that evokes feeling of comfort, warmth and hope. This is what the Christmas octave really means. It makes us understand the true meaning of Emmanuel. We believe and serve a God who never fails to nurture us and who covers us with the colour of love.



# The Pope's Prayer Intention

***For persons with disabilities*** : We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the center of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.

Other papal intentions and videos can be found on: <http://apostleshipofprayer.org/>



### Liturgical Symbols (II)

In this article, we continue to focus on some liturgical symbols used in the Eucharistic celebration. These symbols find their origin in the Bible as it is the first source of Liturgy.

#### Incense

According to the Roman Missal, incensation is an expression of reverence and prayer. When we read the Sacred Scriptures, there are many verses that talk about incense. For instance, Psalm 140, 2: **«Accept my prayer as incense offered to you, and my upraised hands as an evening offering»**; Revelation 8,3: **«Another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense to offer, with the prayers of all God's people, on the golden altar in front of the throne»**. During incensation, the smoke goes up. It symbolizes the prayer of the faithful that ascends to God who dwells in heaven.

The Roman Missal states that incense can be used optionally in any form of Mass. It is used during the

entrance procession, at the beginning of Mass to incense the cross and the altar, at the procession before the Gospel and the proclamation of the Gospel, after the bread and the chalice have been placed on the altar, to incense the offerings, the cross, and the altar as well as the priest and the people; and finally at the elevation of the host and the chalice after the Consecration.

### **The ambo**

During the Eucharistic celebration, the ambo is the place from which the word of God is read and explained. It is the table of the Word. The first reading, the second reading and the Gospel are read from the ambo. The responsorial psalm may be sung also from the ambo since it is part of God's Word. The homily is given from the ambo. The ambo can be considered as the place of proclamation of Jesus' resurrection. This can be clearly seen on Holy Saturday when the deacon or the priest sings the **Alleluia** three times before reading the Gospel.

### **The Altar**

The Altar is the center of the Eucharistic Celebration. It symbolizes Jesus Christ himself who, according to

the fifth preface of Easter, is the Priest, the Altar and the Lamb of sacrifice. Therefore, the Altar is not a geographical center but a theological one. The Altar is also referred to as the Table of the Eucharist.

During the Eucharistic celebration, the significance of the altar is clearly seen through all the signs and events that take place on it. The priest kisses the Altar at the beginning and at the end of the Holy Mass, it is while standing at the Altar that the priest recites some prayers in a low voice, the priest incenses it during the offertory, it is on it that the bread becomes the body of Christ and the wine becomes the blood of Christ.

The Table of the Word (ambo) and the Table of the Eucharist (Altar) are indissolubly connected. In fact, the Word that the faithful hear in the first part of the Eucharistic celebration is the same Word that becomes flesh in the second part.

*Rev. Fr. Jérôme K. M. Kombi,  
Kinshasa, D.R. Congo*



# *Sunday December 24*

## **4<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

*2 Samuel 7:1-5.8b-12.14a.16 / Psalm 89:1-2.3-4.26 and 28 /  
Romans 16:25-27/ Luke 1:26-38.*



“Today in the city of David a Savior has been born to you, who is Christ the Lord.” (Luke 2:11)



## *Let it be done to me according to your word*

**I**n the fullness of time, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman (Gal 4:4). And this woman, chosen and predestined from all eternity to be the Mother of the Saviour, had consecrated her virginity to God, renouncing even the possibility and honour of counting the Messiah among her direct descendants. Mary appears as the Mother of the Messiah, one who will give all her love to Jesus, with an undivided heart, as a prototype of the self-giving that the Lord will ask of many. As a function of her Motherhood, she was surrounded by all the graces and privileges that made her worthy of the dwelling of the Most High. God chose virgin Mary and bestowed her all his love and power. He did not allow her to be touched by sin: neither original nor personal. She was conceived Immaculate, without stain. Her dignity is almost infinite. As in every person, her vocation was a central moment of her life: she was born to be the Mother of God, chosen by the Blessed Trinity from all eternity. Let us not forget that she is also our Mother.



**Sunday** December 24

To us, vocation is also the central point of our life. It is the axis around which everything else is organised. Everything depends on knowing and fulfilling what God asks of us. But even though vocation is the key that opens the doors to true happiness, there are those who do not want to know it; they prefer to do their own will instead of God's will, without seeking the way by which they will surely reach Heaven and make many others happy. The Lord makes special appeals, even today. He needs us, because the harvest is plentiful, and the labourers are few (Mt 9:37). There are harvests that are lost because there is no one to gather them. May our response to the call be like Mary's. Let it be done to me according to your word. Today we can ask ourselves: Does the Lord want something more from me?

*Rev. Fr. Silvano Ochuodho, Kenya*



**Entrance Antiphon** (*Is 45:8*)

Drop down dew from above, you heavens, and let the clouds rain down the Just One; let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.

**The Gloria in excelsis** (*Glory to God in the highest*) **is not said**

**Collect**

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord, your grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son was made known by the message of an Angel, may by his Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of his Resurrection. Who lives and reigns. **Amen.**

**First Reading** (*2 Samuel 7:1-5.8b-12.14a.16*) ———

**A reading from the second Book of Samuel**

When King David dwelt in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies round about, the king said to Nathan the prophet, “See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent.” And Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that is in your heart; for the Lord is with you.” But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, “Go and tell my servant David, ‘Thus says the Lord: Would you build me a house to dwell in? I took you



**Sunday** December 24

from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. “And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure for ever before me; your throne shall be established for ever.”

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

***Responsorial Psalm*** —————  
***(Psalm (88) 89:2-3.4-5.27 and 29)***





For - ev - er I will sing of your  
stead - fast love, O Lord.

**R. I will sing forever of your mercies, O Lord.**

I will sing forever of your mercies, O Lord;  
through all ages my mouth will proclaim your fidelity.  
I have declared your mercy is established forever;  
your fidelity stands firm as the heavens. R.

“With my chosen one I have made a covenant;  
I have sworn to David my servant:  
I will establish your descendants forever,  
and set up your throne through all ages. R.

“He will call out to me, ‘You are my father,  
my God, the rock of my salvation.’  
I will keep my faithful love for him always;  
with him my covenant shall last.” R.



Sunday December 24

***Second Reading (Romans 16:25-27)*** 

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**A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans**

Brethren: To him who is able to strengthen you according to my Gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed and through the prophetic writings is made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith — to the only wise God be glory for evermore through Jesus Christ! **Amen.**

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

***Acclamation (Luke 1:38)***

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word. **Alleluia.**

***Gospel (Luke 1:26b-38)*** 

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**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke**

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 came to her and said, "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might



be. And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour 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 for ever; and of his kingdom there will be no end.” And Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I know not man?” And the angel said to 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 kinswoman Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible.” And Mary said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her. The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### **Prayer of the Faithful**

*The following intentions are suggestions only.*

℟. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For leaders of the Church, entrusted to be good shepherds of God’s people on earth, we pray to the Lord: ℟.



**Sunday** December 24

For those in positions of authority, called to act responsibly, we pray to the Lord: *R.*

For Christians everywhere, as they prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ, we pray to the Lord: *R.*

For our community, as we work to heal our relationships with God and with one another, we pray to the Lord: *R.*

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

May the Holy Spirit, O Lord, sanctify these gifts laid upon your altar, just as he filled with his power the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Communion Antiphon** (*Is 7:14*)

**Behold a Virgin shall conceive, and shall bear a son; and his name will be called Emmanuel.**

### **Prayer after Communion**

Having received this pledge of eternal redemption, we pray, almighty God, that as the feast day of our salvation draws ever nearer, so we may press forward all the more eagerly to the worthy celebration of the mystery of your Son's Nativity. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**



# Monday December 25

## The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)

*Mass at Night: Isaiah 9:1-6/ Psalm (95) 96/ Titus 2:11-14/ Luke 2:1-14*

*Mass at Dawn: Isaiah 62:11-12/ Psalm (96) 97/ Titus 3:4-7/ Luke 2:15-20*

*Mass during the day: Isaiah 52:7-10/ Psalm (97) 98/ Hebrews 1:1-6/ John 1:1-18*



“In him was life, and the life was the light of men.” (John 1:4)



Monday December 25

## *Christmas is a Time of Peace*

Jesus is born! It was all worth it. Joseph can rest a little now. After the journey from Nazareth, walking, with Mary pregnant on the donkey; after looking for a place to spend the night, knocking from door to door without finding a place for the Child-God; after cleaning the Crib and preparing it minimally so that Mary could have Jesus; at last, Christ is born.

Jesus cries, a newborn baby. Joseph weeps, he cannot contain himself. Mary, the Mother of God, smiles. We have a mule and an ox as the only mute spectators of the great event: Jesus, who is God, is there, in a cradle.

On contemplating the scene, we are impressed to see what his riches are: cold, poverty, solitude. Why? What message have you come to bring me, to begin by teaching me that all earthly things are worth nothing, and less than nothing, especially if they are a hindrance to the fulfilment of your will?

With this Christmas, we can try to speak before our Lord in the Crib, to look at Christ our Lord as we see him in this way, wrapped in swaddling clothes, on the straw of a



manger. As He is still a Child, we understand that he is not saying much, but we must try hard to see Him as Doctor as Master. We need to look at Him in this way because we must learn from Him. And to learn from Him, we must try to know His life. The way forward is to read the Holy Gospel, meditate on those scenes that the New Testament relates to us, in order to penetrate the divine meaning of Jesus' earthly life.

Today is a day of peace and joy: it is Christmas. Let us find among the divine gifts to honour this great solemnity: the peace which the angels announced at the birth of the Lord! Everyone desires peace, but only the angels show me how to obtain it: "peace on earth to men of good will".

To have good will, for a Christian is to follow Christ, to be united to God; and for that I need to learn from Jesus, from that life He are beginning today.

*Rev. Fr. Silvano Ochuodho, Kenya*



Monday December 25

## Mass at Night

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### **Entrance Antiphon** (*Psalm 2:7*)

**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.**

***The Gloria is said.***

### **Collect**

O God, who have made this most sacred night radiant with the splendour of the true light, grant, we pray, that we who have known the mysteries of his light on earth, may also delight in his gladness in heaven. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### ***First Reading (Isaiah 9:2-7)*** ---

**A reading from the Book of Isaiah**

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them





has light shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called “Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David, and over his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and for evermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

***Responsorial Psalm (Psalm (95) 96:1-2a.2b-3.11-12.13)***

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To-day is born our Sav iour, — Christ — the Lord.



**Monday** December 25

**R.** To us is born this day a Saviour, who is 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 salvation day by day.

Tell among the nations his glory,  
and his wonders among all the peoples. R.

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. R.

Then will all the trees of the wood shout for joy,  
at the presence of the Lord, for he comes,  
he comes to judge the earth.

He will judge the world with justice;  
he will govern the peoples with his truth. R.

### ***Second Reading (Titus 2:11-14)*** —————

**A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to Titus**

Beloved: The grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men, training us to renounce irreligion and worldly passions, and to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world, awaiting our blessed hope, the appearing of the



glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity and to purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**Acclamation** (*Luke 2:10-11*)

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** I bring you good news of great joy: to us is born this day a Saviour, Christ the Lord. **Alleluia.**

**Gospel** (*Luke 2:1-14*)

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**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke**

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. This was the first enrolment, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be enrolled, each to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be enrolled with Mary his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to be delivered. And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. And in that region



**Monday** December 25

there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, “Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, 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 men with whom he is pleased!”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**The Creed is said all kneel at the words and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate.**

### **Prayer of the Faithful**

*The following intentions are suggestions only.*

℟. **Lord, hear our prayer !**

For our Church in its mission to further the reign of God in the world, we pray to the Lord: ℟.



For children, parents and families all over the world, we pray to the Lord: R.

For strength and comfort for all who are suffering physically, spiritually or emotionally, we pray to the Lord: R.

For our parishes and communities, challenged to see the face of Christ in everyone, we pray to the Lord: R.

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

May the oblation of this day's feast be pleasing to you, O Lord, we pray, that through this most holy exchange we may be found in the likeness of Christ, in whom our nature is united to you. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

### **Communion Antiphon** (*Jn 1:14*)

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

### **Prayer after Communion**

Grant us, we pray, O Lord our God, that we who are gladdened by participation in the feast of our Redeemer's Nativity, may through an honourable way of life become worthy of union with him. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**



Monday December 25

## At the Mass at Dawn

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### **Entrance Antiphon** (*Cf. Isaiah 9:1.5; Luke 1:33*)

Today a light will shine upon us, for the Lord is born for us; and he will be called Wondrous God, Prince of peace, Father of future ages: and his reign will be without end.

*The Gloria in excelsis (Glory to God in the highest) is said.*

### **Collect**

Grant, we pray, almighty God, that, as we are bathed in the new radiance of your incarnate Word, the light of faith, which illumines our minds, may also shine through in our deeds. 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** (*Isaiah 62:11-12*)

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**A reading from the Book of Isaiah**

Behold, the Lord has proclaimed to the end of the earth: Say to the daughter of Zion, “Behold, your salvation comes; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.” And they shall be called The holy people, The



redeemed of the Lord; and you shall be called Sought out, a city not forsaken.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

***Responsorial Psalm (Psalm (96) 97:1 and 6.11-12)***

A light will shine on us this day:  
The Lord is born for us.

The image shows three staves of musical notation in G major (one flat) and 4/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of text. The second staff contains the melody for the second line of text. The third staff contains a simple bass line accompaniment. The lyrics are printed below the notes.

**R. A light will shine on us this day: the Lord is born for us.**

The Lord is king, let earth rejoice;  
let the many islands be glad.  
The skies proclaim his justice;  
all peoples see his glory. R.

Light shines forth for the just one,  
and joy for the upright of heart.



**Monday** December 25

Rejoice in the Lord, you just;  
to the memory of his holiness give thanks. R.

***Second Reading (Titus 3:4-7)*** —————

**A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to Titus**

Beloved: When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit, which he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

***Acclamation (Luke 2:14)***

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased. **Alleluia.**

***Gospel (Luke 2:15-20)*** —————

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke**

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 which had been told them concerning this child; and all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary kept 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. The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

***Creed.***

**Prayer over the Offerings**

May our offerings be worthy, we pray, O Lord, of the mysteries of the Nativity this day, that, just as Christ was born a man and also shone forth as God, so these earthly gifts may confer on us what is divine. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Communion Antiphon** (*Cf. Zechariah 9:9*)

**Rejoice, O Daughter Zion; lift up praise, Daughter Jerusalem: Behold, your King will come, the Holy One and Saviour of the world.**



**Monday** December 25

### **Prayer after Communion**

Grant us, Lord, as we honour with joyful devotion the Nativity of your Son, that we may come to know with fullness of faith the hidden depths of this mystery and to love them ever more and more. Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**



## ....*And the Word Was God*

**J**ohn's Gospel tells us: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God". It is a solemn hymn that circles up and down, from heaven to earth, from the beginning of the world to the day to day and the end of time. Light-darkness; God-world; faith-unbelief. John the Baptist-us. It helps us understand that God is not a distant being. He is a God who speaks, and his Word is intimately close. He became a child and was born in Bethlehem. Before, for centuries, he had spoken through prophets and sent angels as messengers. But now he has spoken to us in another way: he has sent us his Son.

He was in the world that had come into being through him, and the world did not recognise him. He came to his own but his own did not accept him. But to those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to those who believed in his name. Those who did recognise him were "the ox and the donkey": the shepherds, the wise men, Mary, and Joseph. Remember that the stable where the Child Jesus is does not house the fine people: that is where the ox and the donkey live.



**Monday** December 25

But what about us? Are we too far away from the stable because we are too learned and clever to be there? Do we also get so entangled to the point of being blind to the Child Himself that we do not notice Him at all? Are we not also too much in “Jerusalem”, in the palace, too much in ourselves, in our arrogance, to be able to hear the voice of the angels at night, to go to the crib and to adore?

Tonight, the faces of the ox and the donkey look at us with questioning eyes: many people do not understand; do you understand the voice of your Lord? When we place these familiar figures in the crib, we should ask God to give our hearts the simplicity that discovers the Lord in the child, as St Francis did in his day in Greccio. Then only, following closely the words of St. Luke about the shepherds of the first Christmas Eve (Lk 2:20), we too will all return to our homes filled with joy.

***Rev. Fr. Silvano Ochuodho, Kenya***



## Mass during the day

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### **Entrance Antiphon** (*Cf Isaiah 9:5*)

**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.**

**Gloria in excelsis** (*Glory to God in the highest*) **is said.**

### **Collect**

O God, who wonderfully created the dignity of human nature and still more wonderfully restored it, grant, we pray, that we may share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled himself to share in our humanity. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### **First Reading** (*Isaiah 52:7-10*)

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**A reading from the Book of Isaiah**

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good tidings, who publishes peace, who brings good tidings of good, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." Listen, your watchmen lift up their



**Monday** December 25

voice, together they sing for joy; for eye to eye they see the return of the Lord to Zion. Break forth together into singing, you waste places of Jerusalem; for the Lord has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. 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.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

***Responsorial Psalm (Psalm (97) 98:1. 2-3. 3-4. 5-6) —***

All the ends of the earth have seen the  
vic - t'ry of our God.

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

O sing a new song to the Lord,  
for he has worked wonders.



His right hand and his holy arm  
have brought salvation. R.

The Lord has made known his salvation,  
has shown his deliverance to the nations.  
He has remembered his merciful love  
and his truth for the house of Israel. R.

All the ends of the earth have seen  
the salvation of our God.  
Shout to the Lord, all the earth;  
break forth into joyous song,  
and sing out your praise. R.

Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp,  
with the harp and the sound of song.  
With trumpets and the sound of the horn,  
raise a shout before the King, the Lord. R.



Monday December 25

## *Second Reading (Hebrews 1:1-6)*

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### **A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews**

In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the ages. He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature, upholding the universe by his word of power. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has obtained is more excellent than theirs. For to what angel did God ever say, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”? Or again, “I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son”? And again, when he brings the first-born into the world, he says, “Let all God’s angels worship him.”  
The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

### **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.**





***Gospel (John 1:1-18)***

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**The beginning of the holy Gospel according to John**

\* In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. \*

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light.

\* The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. He came to his own home, and his own people received him not. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God; who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only-begotten Son from the Father. \*

(John bore witness to him, and cried, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me,



**Monday** December 25

for he was before me.”) And from his fullness have we all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

***OR SHORTER: (John 1:1-5, 9-14)*** —————

**The beginning of the holy Gospel according to John**

In the beginning, was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. He came to his own home, and his own people received him not. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God; who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among



us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only-begotten Son from the Father.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

***The Creed is said all kneel at the words and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate.***

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

Make acceptable, O Lord, our oblation on this solemn day, when you manifested the reconciliation that makes us wholly pleasing in your sight and inaugurated for us the fullness of divine worship. Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

### **Communion Antiphon** (Cf Psalm (97) 98:3)

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

### **Prayer after Communion**

Grant, O merciful God, that, just as the Saviour of the world, born this day, is the author of divine generation for us, so may he be the giver even of immortality. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**



# Tuesday December 26

4<sup>th</sup> Week of Advent

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## *Feast*

**Saint Stephen, the First Martyr**

### **Entrance Antiphon**

**The gates of heaven were opened for blessed Stephen, who was found to be first among the number of the Martyrs and therefore is crowned triumphant in heaven.**

### **The Gloria in excelsis**

*(Glory to God in the highest)* **is said**

### **Collect**

Grant, Lord, we pray, that we may imitate what we worship, and so learn to love even our enemies, for

we celebrate the heavenly birthday of a man who knew how to pray even for his persecutors. 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.**

### **Reading** \_\_\_\_\_

**(Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59)**

**A reading from the Acts of the Apostles**

In those days: Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and



signs among the people. Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia, arose and disputed with Stephen. But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke. Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth against him. But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God." But they cried out with a loud

voice and stopped their ears and rushed together upon him. Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him; and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. And as they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

***Responsorial Psalm***——  
***(Psalm (30) 31:3bc-4.6 and 8ab.16bc and 17)***  
**R. Into your hands, O Lord,  
I commend my spirit.**

Be a rock of refuge for me, a mighty stronghold to save me. For you are my rock, my stronghold! Lead



Tuesday December 26

me, guide me, for the sake of your name. R.

Into your hands I commend my spirit. You will redeem me, O Lord, O faithful God. Let me be glad and rejoice in your mercy, for you who have seen my affliction. R.

Deliver me from the hands of my enemies and those who pursue me. Let your face shine on your servant. Save me in your merciful love. R.

### Acclamation

*(Psalm (117) 118:26a,27ab)*

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** Blessed is he who enters in the name of the Lord; the Lord is God, and he has given us light.

**Alleluia.**

### Gospel ————— *(Matthew 10:17-22)*

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew**

At that time: Jesus said to his apostles, “Beware of men; for they will deliver you up to councils, and flog you in their synagogues, and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear testimony before them and the Gentiles. When they deliver you up, do not be anxious about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. Brother will deliver up brother to



death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; and you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved."

The Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

May these offerings of our devotion today, be acceptable to you, we

pray, O Lord, for they are prompted by the glorious commemoration of Saint Stephen the Martyr. Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

### **Communion Antiphon**

*(Acts 7:58)* **As they were stoning Stephen, he called out: Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.**

### **Prayer after Communion**

For the many mercies which surround us we



Tuesday December 26

give thanks to you, O Lord, who save us through the Nativity of your Son and gladden us with the celebration of the blessed Martyr Stephen. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Commentary

### Martyrdom

Matthew 10: 17-22

"Martyrdom is the supreme witness given to the truth of the faith: it means bearing witness even unto death" (CCC, 2473). Today there are still Christians martyred for their faith; in reality there always have been.

However, we do not normally suffer persecutions of this kind. Nevertheless, we can suffer other kinds of setbacks for bearing witness to the truth of the faith: contempt, indifference, unjust criticism. Unfortunately, even today, there are people who prefer not to hear Christ's message.

***Rev. Fr. Silvano Ochuodho, Kenya***





# Wednesday December 27

4<sup>th</sup> Week of Advent

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## ***Feast***

**Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist**

### **Entrance Antiphon**

**This is John, who reclined on the Lord's breast at supper, the blessed Apostle to whom celestial secrets were revealed and who spread the words of life through all the world.**

*Or: (Sir 15:5)*

**In the midst of the Church he opened his mouth, and the Lord filled him with the spirit of wisdom and understanding and clothed him in a robe of glory.**

### **The Gloria in excelsis**

*(Glory to God in the highest)* **is said**

### **Collect**

O God, who through the blessed Apostle John have unlocked for us the secrets of your Word, grant, we pray, that we may grasp with proper understanding what he has so marvellously brought to our ear. Through our Lord. **Amen.**



**Reading** \_\_\_\_\_

**(1 John 1:1-4)**

**The beginning of the first Letter of Saint John**

Beloved: That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life — the life was made manifest, and we saw it, and testify to it, and proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was made manifest to us — that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. And

we are writing this that our joy may be complete. The word of the Lord  
**Thanks be to God.**

**Responsorial Psalm** —  
**(Psalm (96) 97:1-2.5-6.11-12)**

**R. Rejoice in the Lord, you just.**

The Lord is king, let earth rejoice; let the many islands be glad. Cloud and darkness surround him; justice and right are the foundation of his throne. R.

The mountains melt like wax before the face of the Lord, before the face of the Lord of all the earth. The skies proclaim his justice; all peoples see his glory. R.

Light shines forth for the just one, and joy for the upright of heart. Rejoice in the Lord, you just; to the memory of his holiness give thanks. R.

## ALLELUIA

*(Revelation 2:10c)*

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** We praise you, O God; we acclaim you as the Lord; the glorious band of apostles sings your praise, O Lord! **Alleluia.**

## Gospel

*(John 20:2-8)*

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to John**

On the first day of the week: Mary Magdalene ran, and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one

whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." Peter then came out with the other disciple, and they went towards the tomb. They both ran, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first; and stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; he saw the linen cloths lying, and the napkin, which had been on his head, not lying with the linen cloths but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed. The Gospel of the Lord

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Prayer over the Offerings**

Sanctify the offerings we have made, O Lord, we pray, and grant that from the banquet of this supper we may draw the hidden wisdom of the eternal Word, just as, from this

same source, you revealed it to your Apostle John. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Communion Antiphon**

*(Jn 1:14-16)* **The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us and from his fullness we have all received.**

**Prayer after Communion**  
Grant, we pray, almighty God, that, the Word made flesh proclaimed by the blessed Apostle John may,

through this mystery which we have celebrated, ever dwell among us. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## John's Encounter with Jesus

## Commentary

John 20: 1a and 2-8

That first meeting with Christ stuck in John's mind, so much so that, even when he was very old when he wrote his Gospel, he could remember the hour when it happened.

From then on, John began to do apostolate, telling his brother James what Jesus had explained to him that evening. John got to know Christ better day by day. In the meantime, Christ was entering into his life, leading him along paths of greater dedication, of more love. John was faithful in this stage of preparation.

**Rev. Fr. Silvano Ochuodho, Kenya**



# Thursday December 28

4<sup>th</sup> week in Ordinary Time

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## *Feast*

**The Holy Innocents, Martyrs**

### **Entrance Antiphon**

**The innocents were slaughtered as infants for Christ; spotless, they follow the Lamb and sing for ever: Glory to you, O Lord.**

### **The Gloria in excelsis**

*(Glory to God in the highest)* **is said**

### **Collect**

O God, whom the Holy Innocents confessed and proclaimed on this thy,

not by speaking but by dying, grant, we pray, that the faith in you which we confess with our lips may also speak through our manner of life. 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.**

**Reading** —————  
**(1 John 1:5-2:2)**

**A reading from the first Letter of Saint John**

Beloved: This is the message we have heard from Jesus Christ and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not live according to the truth; but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive

ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. My little children, I am writing this to you so that you may not sin; but if any one does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the expiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

The word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**Responsorial Psalm** —  
*(Psalm (123) 124:2-3.4-5.7b-8)*

**R.** Our life, like a bird, has  
escaped from the snare of  
the fowler.

“If the Lord had not been  
on our side / when men rose  
against us,

then would they have  
swallowed us alive when  
their anger was kindled.” R.

“Then would the waters  
have engulfed us, the  
torrent gone over us; over  
our head would have swept  
/ the raging waters.” R.

Indeed, the snare has  
been broken, / and we have  
escaped. Our help is in the  
name of the Lord, who  
made heaven and earth. R.

**Acclamation**

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** We  
praise you, O God; we  
acclaim you as the Lord;  
the white-robed army of  
martyrs sings your praise.  
**Alleluia.**

**Gospel** —————  
*(Matthew 2:13-18)*

**A reading from the holy Gospel  
according to Matthew**

When the Wise Men had  
departed, behold, an angel  
of the Lord appeared to  
Joseph in a dream and  
said, “Rise, take the child  
and his mother, and flee  
to Egypt, and remain there  
till I tell you; for Herod  
is about to search for the  
child, to destroy him.” And  
he rose and took the child  
and his mother by night,





and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt have I called my son.” Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the Wise Men, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the Wise Men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: “A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they were no more.” The Gospel

of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

Receive, O Lord, we pray, the offerings of your devoted servants and purify us as we faithfully serve these, your mysteries, by which you grant justification even to those who lack understanding. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Communion Antiphon**

*(Rv 14:4)* **Behold those redeemed as the first fruits of the human race for God and the Lamb, and who follow the Lamb wherever he goes.**

### **Prayer after Communion**

Grant, O Lord, abundant salvation to your faithful as they receive your holy gifts

on the feast day of these, your Saints, who, though still unable to profess your Son in speech, were crowned with heavenly grace on account of his birth. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## Commentary

### Help me to be a Christian

Matthew 2: 13-18

God is always able to bring good even out of the worst evils. These Holy Innocents are children who died in Christ's place. That is why they are considered the first martyrs and saints who gave their lives for Christ. They confessed Christ before men not with words, but with their own blood.

Help me Oh Christ to be a Christian "in deed", and not only "in word": may I be able to bear witness to You to those around me by my sacrificed and well-done work, and by my unnoticed details of service to the others.

***Rev. Fr. Silvano Ochuodho, Kenya***



# Friday December 29

5<sup>th</sup> Day in the Octave of Christmas

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## **Ferial**

*Or Saint Thomas Becket, bishop and martyr*

### **Entrance Antiphon**

*(Jn 3:16)* **God so loved the world that he gave his Only Son, so that all who believe in him may not perish, but may have eternal life.**

### **Collect**

Almighty and invisible God, who dispersed the darkness of this world by the coming of your light, look, we pray, with serene countenance upon us, that we may acclaim with fitting praise the greatness of the Nativity of your Only Begotten Son.

Who live and reigns with you. **Amen.**

### **Reading** \_\_\_\_\_

**(1 John 2:3-11)**

A reading from the first Letter of Saint John

Beloved: By this we may be sure that we know Jesus Christ, if we keep his commandments. He who says "I know him" but disobeys his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps his word, in him truly love for God is perfected. By

this we may be sure that we are in him: he who says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked. Beloved, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment which you had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word which you have heard. Yet I am writing you a new commandment, which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. He who says he is in the light and hates his brother is in the darkness still. He who loves his brother abides in the light, and in it there is no cause for stumbling. But he who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does

not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**Responsorial Psalm —  
(Psalm (95) 96:1-2a.2b-  
3.5b-6)**

**R. Let the heavens rejoice  
and earth be glad.**

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 salvation day by day. Tell among the nations his glory, and his wonders among all the peoples. R.

It was the Lord who made the heavens. In his presence are majesty and splendour,

strength and honour in his holy place. R

### **Acclamation**

*(Luke 2:32)*

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** A light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.  
**Alleluia.**

### **Gospel**

*(Luke 2:22-35)*

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke**

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, the parents of Jesus brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every male that opens the womb shall be called holy

to the Lord”) and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.” Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. And inspired by the Spirit he came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, “Lord, now let your servant depart in

peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.” And his father and his mother marvelled at what was said about him; and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is spoken against (and a sword will pierce through your own also), that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed.”

The Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

Receive our oblation, O Lord, by which is brought about a glorious exchange, that by offering what you have given, we may merit to receive your very self. Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

### **Communion Antiphon**

*(Lk 1:78)* **Through the heartfelt mercy of our God, the Dawn from on high will visit us.**



### Prayer after Communion

Grant, we pray, almighty God, that, by the power of these holy mysteries,

our life may be constantly sustained. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### Jesus, purify me

### Commentary

Luke 2: 22-35

Mary was not unclean, given that her conception was the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit and not of a man. She however wants to fulfil the law and purifies herself.

Jesus, how many times have I failed to keep your law, your commandments! I do need to purify myself. First of all, with a good confession.

And then I can purify myself further with more prayer, with small sacrifices, or by gaining indulgences.

May I always be in awe that you have stayed so close so that I can adore you.

**Rev. Fr. Silvano Ochuodho, Kenya**



# Saturday December 30

6<sup>th</sup> Day in the Octave of Christmas

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## Entrance Antiphon

*(Wis 18:14-15)* **When a profound silence covered all things and night was in the middle of its course, your all-powerful Word, O Lord, bounded from heaven's royal throne.**

## The Gloria in excelsis

*(Glory to God in the highest)* **is said**

## Collect

Grant, we pray, almighty God, that the newness of the Nativity in the flesh of your Only Begotten Son may set us free, for ancient servitude holds us bound beneath the yoke of sin. 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.**

## Reading

*(1 John 2:12-17)*

A reading from the first Letter of Saint John

I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven for his sake. I am writing to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the Evil One. I write to you, children, because you



know the Father. I write to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the Evil One. Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**Responsorial Psalm** —  
**(Psalm (95) 96:7-8a.8b-9.10)**

**R. Let the heavens rejoice  
and earth be glad.**

Give the Lord, you families of peoples, give the Lord glory and power; give the Lord the glory of his name. R.

Bring an offering and enter his courts; worship the Lord in holy splendour. O tremble before him, all the earth. R.

Say to the nations, "The Lord is king." The world he made firm in its place; he will judge the peoples in fairness. R.

## **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.**

## **Gospel** ————— **(Luke 2:36-40)**

### **A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke**

At that time: There was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher; she was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years from her virginity, and as a widow till she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshipping with fasting and prayer night and day. And coming up at that

very hour she gave thanks to God, and spoke of him to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. And when they had performed everything according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him. The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

## **Prayer over the Offerings**

Receive with favour, O Lord, we pray, the offerings of your people, that what they profess with devotion and faith may be theirs through these heavenly mysteries. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



**Communion Antiphon**  
*(Jn 1:16)* **From his fullness  
 we have all received,  
 grace upon grace.**

**Prayer after Communion**  
 O God, who touch us  
 through our partaking of

your Sacrament, work, we  
 pray, the effects of its power  
 in our hearts, that we may  
 be made fit to receive your  
 gift through this very gift  
 itself Through Christ our  
 Lord. **Amen.**

## Prayer and Sacrifice

### Commentary

Luke 2: 36-40

Prayer and sacrifices are two important pillars of my spiritual life, and the best means of drawing others closer to Christ. That is why Anne could speak of You “to all those who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem”.

Do I pray every day; do I put my head and heart into those minutes to fall more in love with God; do I make at least one resolution every day to improve in my work, in my spiritual life?

Do I make some small sacrifices, in punctuality, in order, in details of service to the others?

***Rev. Fr. Silvano Ochuodho, Kenya***



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